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**THE NORFOLK BROADS**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

NORFOLK (Little Guides)

SUFFOLK ( " )





Frank Southgate



# THE NORFOLK BROADS

BY  
**WILLIAM A. DUTT**

ASSISTED BY CONTRIBUTORS

WITH 46 PLATES IN COLOUR AND  
23 IN MONOTONE BY  
**FRANK SOUTHGATE, R.B.A.**  
9 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS AND 5 MAPS



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# THE NORFOLK BROADS

## PART I

### CHAPTER I

#### OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF BROADLAND

**E**VEN if the general aspect of the district were not enough to indicate it, there is abundant geological evidence that the valleys of East Norfolk were formerly the bed of a large estuary or tidal waste of waters connected with the North Sea. The Icenic settlement on whose site Norwich now stands, was, at the time when the Roman galleys came up against it, situated on some elevated land near the point where the Tas, now a shrunk stream, but then a large river, discharged its waters into this great estuary. All the level marshlands stretching as far inland as Bungay in one direction and Aylsham in another, then presented a similar aspect, only on a larger scale, to that which Breydon wears to-day. The Suffolk Hundred of Lothingland, which contains the town of Lowestoft, the parish of Gorleston, and over a score other parishes, was then an island ; for there was a considerable outlet at Kirkley, through which a part of the waters of the Waveney valley found its way to the sea. At Horsey, where even now only a ridge of sandhills separates the marshlands around Hickling Broad and Horsey Mere from the sea, there was another opening through which the tides ebbed and flowed. But the largest mouth of the estuary, extending from Caister to Gorleston, was about four miles wide. It was in the midst of this opening that the sandbank formed on which some fishermen established a settlement of wooden huts,

which, as the inland waters decreased in area and the mouth of the estuary narrowed, grew into the town of Great Yarmouth. Connected with the valleys of the Yare, Bure, and Waveney are smaller valleys drained by the rivers Chet, Ant, and Thurne; these, with the lowlands around Fritton Lake and Ormesby, Filby, and Rollesby Broad, also formed part of the East Norfolk estuary whose entrance was called *Garienis* or *Gariensis*.

At the time when the Roman occupation had extended to eastern England this district was a part of the territory of the Iceni, a strong and warlike tribe whose Queen Boudicca, or Boadicea, inflicted a severe defeat on the Romans before her army was in turn defeated by them. From what Dion Cassius and Tacitus tell us about them, it seems that the Iceni were in a fairly advanced state of culture, and many of them were people of considerable wealth. Tacitus relates that one of the causes of their rising against the Romans was that the veterans forming the Roman colony at *Camulodunum* (Colchester) 'by force deprived the most illustrious of the Icenians of the possessions which had been transmitted to them by their ancestors', and he also states that the priests of a Roman temple at *Camulodunum*, 'devoured the whole substance of the country'. The chief town of the Iceni seems to have been *Venta Icenorum* (Caistor St. Edmund), situated about four miles from Norwich, and just outside the present limit of the Broad's district, though having a position in the valley of the River Tas to which ships could probably ascend during the Roman period. Recent investigations carried out at *Venta Icenorum* have revealed that the town was laid out in the reign of Vespasian and that it was still being occupied in the second half of the fourth century. During this period the great Roman fortress *Garianonum* (Burgh Castle) was built to guard the entrance to the great East Anglian estuary, while a vanished camp at Caister by Yarmouth was probably constructed for the same purpose.

At the time of the Teutonic overpowering of the Britons of eastern England, the valleys of East Norfolk were, so far as we can ascertain, still in their estuarine state. On the highlands of Norwich, and near Reedham, where the New Cut now



connects the Yare and Waveney, the Saxon kings of East Anglia built residences and held their courts. But the sea-tides still ebbcd and flowed over the oozy flats which stretched many miles inland from the coast ; the wild cries of the sea- and shore-birds were the only voices of this watery wilderness, which seemed destined never to become the dwelling-place of man. True, here and there were little oases or islets—*holms* they were called by the Anglo-Saxons—and on one of them, in what is now the Bure valley, a hermit named Suneman is said to have established himself during the ninth century. At Ellingham, too, between Beccles and Bungay, and on the larger island tracts of Lothingland and the Flegg district, there probably were little colonies of Saxons ; but although the sandbank on which Yarmouth was afterwards built was slowly forming at the mouth of the great estuary, the sea still claimed the valleys as its own.

Then came the Danes, whose attacks the Romans had dreaded, and the sight of their ' black war-keels ' struck terror into the hearts of the peace-loving Saxons. The story of Ragnar Lodbrog, whose boat is said to have been blown across the North Sea and into the Norfolk estuary, and who, after he landed at Reedham, was murdered by Bern, King Edmund's huntsman, is probably mythical ; but it indicates that the monkish chroniclers saw nothing improbable in the suggestion that Lodbrog could not land until he reached the shore of the highlands at Reedham. And we know that in the ninth century the Danes often ravaged the Norfolk coast, and that the dwellers on the shores of the East Norfolk estuary suffered severely at their hands. Year after year they came, the raven banner of Ingvar and Ubba flying from the mastheads of their viking ships. They forced their way up the Bure valley and destroyed perhaps the hermitage of Suneman ; in the valley of the Waveney they compelled the Saxons to take refuge in their churches, and there burnt them alive as a sacrifice to Thor and Wodin. Later, in 1004, Sweyn sailed a Danish fleet up to Norwich, which he plundered and burnt. The Flegg (Norse *flegg*, flat) Hundred contained within the island tract to the north of the chief mouth of the estuary was wrested from its Saxon holders, and in the names which its hamlets

bear to-day we have conclusive proof that there the raiders established a considerable settlement ; for in Rollesby, Mautby, and other hamlets we find the Danish *by* suffixed to the names of Rollo and Malthe, who probably were viking raiders who chose the dry ground around the Flegg inlets as sites for their homesteads, because there they could moor their boats, dry their nets, and live just such lives as they had been accustomed to, in the intervals of their viking voyages, on their own wild coast. And there, near the banks of Breydon and on the marshlands bordering the lower waters of the Yare and Bure, you may to-day, if you study carefully the faces and inquire the names of some of the dwellers amid those lonesome marshes, discover descendants of those viking settlers who fished the waters of the Norfolk estuary a thousand years ago. But the period during which the Danes held the Norfolk Saxons in subjection was a comparatively brief one. Apart from the names of some of the villages, there is little in Broadland to remind us of the raiding settlers. It was, however, according to tradition, their King Canute who, on the site of Suneman's hermitage, founded the Abbey of St. Benet-at-Holm ; and though there are no traces of Danish work in the scanty ruins of this once famous monastic house, it may have owed its wealth and influence in some measure to his lavish endowments.

To go back a little in the history of the East Norfolk valleys, it may seem somewhat strange that the Romans, when they built such important stations as the camps at Burgh and Caister, did not, as they did in the marshland district near Lynn, compel the conquered Iceni to construct banks along the coast to keep out the sea, and so reclaim some of the oozy levels daily submerged by the tides. The fact that they did not do so seems to indicate that the tidal inflow through the mouths of the estuary was far greater than upon the lowlands lying along the borders of the Wash. As a matter of fact, the gradual choking up of the entrances to the East Norfolk estuary was an entirely natural process ; and, having now arrived at the period when the town of Yarmouth came into existence, it may be as well to explain how this change was brought about.



YARMOUTH FROM BREXTON



Mr. R. C. Taylor, whose *Geology of East Norfolk* was considered so reliable a work that Lyell based upon it most of his remarks on the character of the Norfolk coast in his *Principles of Geology*, tells us that the effect of the great tidal current of the North Sea has been to undermine the high projecting portions of the coast and deposit the debris thus detached to the southward of the undermined cliffs. That this wasting process is continually going on will be admitted at once by every one who is acquainted with the cliffs between Happisburgh and Cromer. The debris of these cliffs either forms shoals a little distance from the coast, or low tracts of land along the shore. Some twenty miles of the Norfolk coast have been subjected to this erosion, which, with the assistance of innumerable land springs in the cliffs, has resulted in the total destruction of the ancient villages of Shipden, Wimpwell, and Eccles, the demolition of several manors, and of large portions of several parishes. In the winter of 1825, Taylor writes, a tract of twelve acres was suddenly detached from the Cromer cliffs; since then many landslides have occurred. 'The effects of this destructive process are traced in the banks and shoals extending twenty miles to the southward, and the formation of the low flat tract between Happisburgh and Gorleston. In their progress the tidal currents possess sufficient strength and velocity to preserve a deep channel, locally called Roads, parallel with the shore; but they deposit, both on the sea and land sides of this passage, the alluvial matter with which the waters are charged.'

The destruction of one part of the coast thus led to the consolidation or banking up of another, with the result that the mouth of the great estuary, once four miles wide, became so choked that only a comparatively narrow channel was left for the inrush of the tides. Against the bank formed by the set of the tides, sediment brought down from the estuary by the ebb gradually accumulated; then the wind-blown sand from the neighbouring beach covered it; and finally the decay of vegetable matter completed the composition of the land upon which the town of Yarmouth stands. The channel or Gap at Horsey was first closed by this process, that being the northernmost of the estuary's mouths. Then the largest entrance



became so shallow, owing to the forming of a sandy bar, that in the reign of Edward III the ship channel, then much farther north than it is now, was entirely blocked. Since then the great difficulty has been, not to prevent the inrush of the tide, but to preserve a deep channel for shipping. Seven times between 1347 and 1560 the Yarmouth port authorities found it necessary to construct new havens. So essential was it that a clear channel should be preserved, that every monarch from Edward III to Charles I granted money for the purpose. Between 1560 and 1650 five other havens had to be constructed, four during that time meeting with a like fate to that which befell those made during the previous two hundred years. The expense entailed by these operations is said to have amounted to over a million pounds. As Taylor points out, there was a constant effort on the part of Nature to stretch a barrier across the mouth of the estuary, so as to connect Caister and Gorleston and shut out the sea from the inland lowlands.

The process which resulted in the closing of Horsey Gap and the partial closing of the chief mouth of the estuary was also seen in operation at Lowestoft. There the debris of the northern cliffs was heaped along the border of the low-lying denes or dunes ; and the wind-blown sand, in which the binding maram-grass and sand sedge rooted themselves, increased the height and stability of these natural barriers. On this self-reclaimed land the greater part of Old Lowestoft, or the beachmen's quarter, is built. The mouth of the estuarine Lake Lothing was closed by an artificial embankment about the middle of the seventeenth century, with the object of excluding the sea from certain lands that were subject to inundation. This embankment was subsequently cut through for the purpose of enlarging the harbour ; but a lock at Mutford Bridge prevents the waters of Oulton Broad and the Waveney entering the sea by way of Lake Lothing and Lowestoft Harbour.

But these remarks on the processes which led to the forming of the wide marshlands bordering the Broadland rivers have brought us down to times almost within the memory of living men, and it is necessary for the completion of this rough outline of the history of Broadland to go back to the days of the Norman Conquest of England.



After the Battle of Hastings was fought and won, King William had little difficulty in bringing the greater part of East Anglia into subjection. It was only on the Isle of Ely, that natural fortress in the midst of the trackless fens, that a small body of the English, led, if we may believe the monkish chroniclers, by the dauntless Hereward, succeeded in holding out for a while against the Conqueror and his armies. A few of the Norfolk and Suffolk men may have fled to that fenland fastness, but the rest of the inhabitants of the two easternmost counties submitted to the Normans, and saw their manors divided amongst the king's favourite barons. Norwich, where Uffa, the first king of the East Angles, is supposed to have had his centre of government, was given to Ralph de Guader, who was made Earl of Norfolk. He it was who built on the huge artificial mound on which the castle now stands a fortress which, when the earl rebelled against the king, was able to withstand a six months' siege. Of this stronghold there are now no traces, but of the castle built by Roger Bigod in the latter part of the eleventh century the huge tower or keep remains. This Roger Bigod, who succeeded De Guader as Earl of Norfolk, also had a share in the founding of Norwich Cathedral, and it is not unlikely that some of the Norman work still in evidence among the churches of Broadland belonged to ecclesiastical buildings he built or endowed. His descendants also were great builders of castles and religious houses. One of them built the massive stronghold at Bungay, choosing, in all probability, some existing earthworks as its site ; and from that commanding position he ruled the valley of the Waveney. A Bigod, too, it was who founded Weybridge Priory, which stood at Acle, on the Bure.

Under the Normans Norwich speedily became a place of considerable importance. In 1086 it contained 1360 burgesses ; and in 1122, on the occasion of his visiting it, Henry I granted it a charter conferring upon its citizens like privileges to those enjoyed by the citizens of London. It became the see of the great East Anglian diocese in 1094, and Herbert de Lozinga, who was then bishop, founded the church which gradually grew into a grand cathedral. By this time the river channel of the Yare valley had narrowed considerably, and the Tas was no

longer navigable ; but in 1075, Ralph de Guader, when he fled to Brittany after rebelling against the king, was able to take ship at Norwich ; and so late as 1327 the citizens pleaded, in connexion with a charge against the burgesses of Yarmouth, that Norwich was ' situate on the bank of a water and arm of the sea, which extended from thence to the main ocean, upon which ships, boats, and other vessels have immemorially come to their market ', and that ' all foreign merchants paid all their customs at Norwich, which was the then port, and in the king's hands '.<sup>1</sup>

Yarmouth, meanwhile, from being a small settlement of fishermen's huts on the sandy bar which had formed at the mouth of the estuary, was becoming a flourishing fishing station and busy port. A ' greate store of sea-faring men, as also of greate numbers of the fishermen of France, Flanders, and of Holland, Zeelande, and of all the lowe countries ', yearly visited it ; and during the herring-fishing season the barons of the Cinque ports, who had been granted jurisdiction over the port, sent their bailiffs to Yarmouth to preserve order and collect tolls.<sup>2</sup> Here, too, Bishop Lozinga founded a church, now the great parish church of St. Nicholas ; and in 1272 Henry III by charter granted the townsfolk the right to call the town ' Great ' Yarmouth. Beccles in its early days had its share in the herring fisheries, for the herring shoals made their way up the estuary ; but it was in Lowestoft that the Yarmouth authorities had their chief rival, for at Kirkley Haven the

<sup>1</sup> Blomefield's *Norfolk*.

<sup>2</sup> ' It is chiefly from the enactments and ordinances of successive sovereigns that the early history of the English Fisheries can be traced. At the time of the Conquest a great number of maritime fiefs on the eastern coast carried on the herring fishery, and there were numerous *salinae* in Norfolk and Suffolk. An immense number of herrings were taken in the large estuaries which at that period covered the eastern valleys. Norwich and Beccles were great rival marts for the sale of herrings. There is evidence of Norwich being a fishing town in the reign of Canute, for Alfric, Bishop of East Anglia, having bestowed his *hagh*, by Norwich (the site on which the church of St. Lawrence was afterwards erected), upon the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury, an annual ground rent was paid to that monastery of a last of herrings. The fee farm rent of thirty thousand herrings paid to Edward the Confessor on the manor of Beccles, was at the Domesday survey raised by the Conqueror to the tollage of sixty thousand, and many similar imposts are recorded in *Domesday* as paid by the villages and towns upon the shores of the estuaries ' Nall's *Chapters on the East Anglian Coast*.

foreign and native fishermen could land their catches without paying the customary dues.

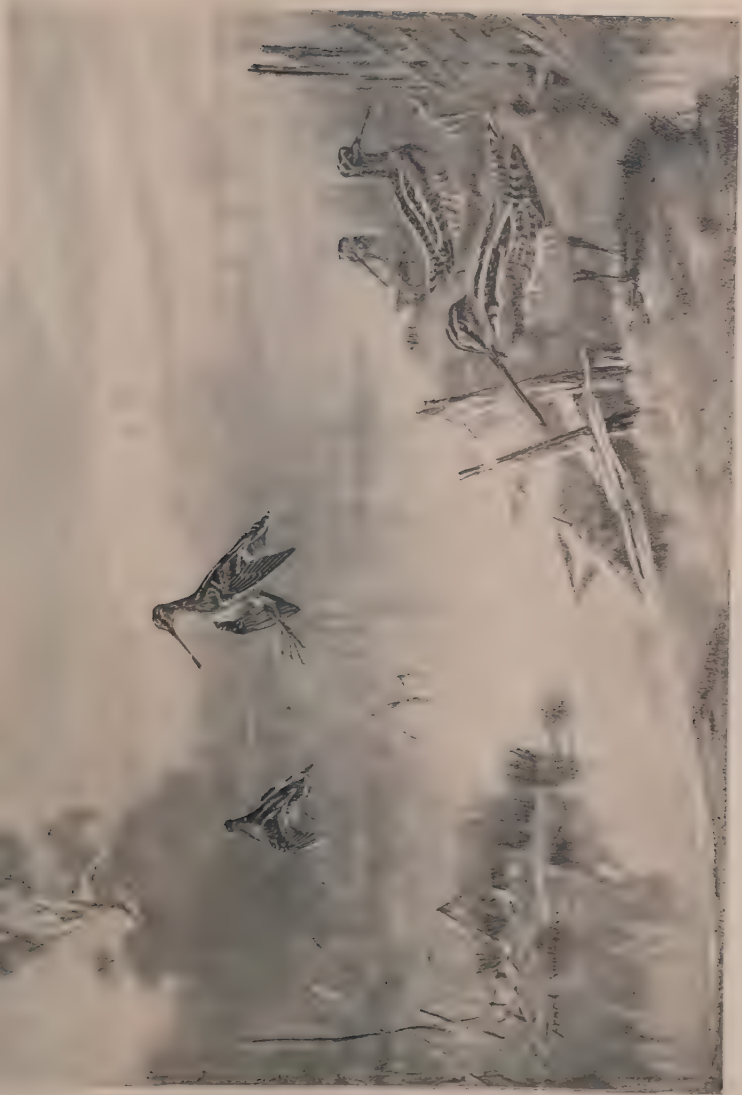
So we see that soon after the Norman Conquest important towns came into existence on the borders of the Broadland valleys. Norwich quickly established its claim to be considered the chief industrial centre of East Anglia; Yarmouth soon became the most important port; Lowestoft its chief rival; Beccles a rising town; and Bungay a seat of one of the great baronial families. On many of the manors adjoining the valleys Norman churches were erected, some of which replaced the Saxon buildings destroyed by the Danes. Of this Norman work we still have good examples in the round towers at Hadiscoe and Herringfleet, and in the doorways of Wroxham, Chedgrave, Aldeby, and other Broadland churches.

Between 1100 and 1240 monastic houses were founded at Aldeby, Langley, Herringfleet, Hickling, Acle, and Bungay, the sites chosen being close to the rivers and marshes, which provided abundant fish and fowl for the monks and nuns. Peaceful times ensuing, efforts were made to drain some of the swampy lands. The rivers were embanked, and causeways were constructed across the trackless, treacherous fens. The causeway now known as Acle Dam was certainly in existence in the eleventh century, for in 1101 it was found necessary to repair it; and before 1274 the river Ant was embanked for the protection of the lands belonging to the flourishing Abbey of St. Benet-at-Holm. But for centuries there remained wide tracts of swamp, amid which the bittern, spoonbill, avocet, and black tern nested, where thousands of warblers swung and sung on the swaying reeds, where misleading will-o'-the-wisps flickered, and over which buzzards, hawks, and kestrels hovered, and herons flew with slow wing-beats to their nests in the bordering woods. In the shallow lakes or Broads amid these swamps large shoals of bream provided food for the innumerable otters which haunted the sedgy shores, and hungry pike preyed on the young water-fowl which ventured out of the reed beds. Night and day the wild crying of curlews, the bleating of snipe, and the piping of redshanks were heard above the 'chucking' of the reed- and sedge-warblers. At night the peasants who dwelt on the borders of the fens were often

startled by the loud clanging of wild geese or the trumpeting of wild swans. In winter the ooze flats from which the sea receded at ebb tide were often white with wild-fowl which came there to feed. On the shores and sedgy islets of the Broads were colonies of gulls, whose clamouring during the nesting season drowned the warbling and calling of all the smaller birds of the reeds and fens.

While efforts were being made to drain these fenny tracts formed by the deposit of alluvial soil from the interior of the country, the sea still tried hard at times to win back its ancient bed. The reclaimers' work closely resembled that of the old-time dwellers among the Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire fens ; and though, in course of time, it met with a like reward, it was not done without incessant toil and the encountering of disheartening difficulties. For the line of shifting sandhills which the sea and winds had reared along the East Norfolk coast was but a frail barrier against the high tides which strong westerly winds sometimes created in the North Sea ; and when such tides occurred in stormy weather, the surf-scour often demolished a portion of this sandy bastion and the sea broke in upon the lowlands. Such a disaster happened in the winter of 1287. We find an account of it in the chronicles of John of Oxnead, who writes : ' In 1287, in the month of December, the seventh of the Kalends of January, the 8th day of the moon, the sea, in dense darkness, began to be agitated by the violence of the wind, and in its agitation to burst through its accustomed limits, occupying towns, fields, and other places adjacent to the coast, and inundating parts which no age in past times had recorded to have been covered with sea water. For, issuing forth about the middle of the night, it suffocated or drowned men and women sleeping in their beds, with infants in their cradles, and all kinds of cattle and fresh-water fishes ; and it tore up houses from their foundations with all they contained, and carried them away and threw them into the sea with irrecoverable damage. Many, when surrounded by the waters, sought a place of refuge by mounting into trees ; but, benumbed by the cold, they were overtaken by the water and fell into it and were drowned. Whereby it happened that in the town of Hyckelyngge (Hickling) nine score of different





LONG BILLS





sexes and ages perished in the aforesaid inundation.' It was, it appears from this account, in the neighbourhood of Horsey that the sea broke in on this occasion, and it was there that a serious inroad of the sea, fortunately unattended by loss of human life, was experienced in 1897.

Similar inundations occurred in later years, destroying in a few hours work which had taken years to accomplish ; but if Stowe and a contemporary writer can be believed, the Hickling flood was nothing like so serious as those which devastated Kent, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk in 1607 ; for then, we read, thousands of men, women, and children were drowned, whole towns and villages demolished, and vast numbers of cattle and sheep destroyed. The destruction wrought at this time has undoubtedly been greatly exaggerated, but that serious damage was done is evident from the fact that in 1609 an Act of Parliament was passed ' for the speedy recovery of many thousands of acres of Marsh Ground and other Ground within the Counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, lately surrounded by the Rage of the sea in divers parts of the said Counties, and for the Prevention of Danger of the like surrounding hereafter '. The sea, we are informed by the preamble of this Act, had caused a flood which affected places as far removed from each other as Horsey and Gillingham, Caister, Oulton, and Carrow. At Yarmouth part of the Haven Bridge was destroyed, and the Haven House, in which were the ' Haven man ' and his son, was ' carried into the marshes six miles from the Haven '. Blomefield relates that ' a part of the sea-shore lying between the towns of Great Yarmouth and Happisburgh, lying low, and being sand only, was lately (1607) broken down and washed away by the violence of the tides, so that the sea broke in every tide, and with every sea-wind came up the Norwich River into the very body and heart of the county of Norfolk, drowning much hard grounds, and many thousand acres of marsh, upon which great part of the wealth of the county depends, being most rich grounds, and without which the uplands, which are mostly dry and barren, cannot be husbanded ; and by means of the salt waters, the fisheries between Yarmouth and Norwich, as well in rivers and Broads, were much damaged, so that the great plenty which used to maintain many poor men was

gone, and the markets badly served with fresh fish ; to remedy which there were appointed eighteen commissioners, who, according to the direction of the Act, were to stop the breaches, it being to be feared that in time to come further mischief might follow by other breaches, or enlarging of those already made, if speedy remedy be not provided, and God of His mercy stop not the same.'

These inroads of the sea often nullified the Broadlanders' efforts to reclaim the swamps ; but in the fourteenth century the loss of life by flood was hardly worthy of consideration beside that caused by an outbreak, in 1349, of the terrible Black Death. Then, it may be truly said, the Angel of Death hardly for a moment ceased to cast the shadow of his wings over the eastern counties. In Norwich and Yarmouth many thousands of people died ; and there was no town, and scarcely a hamlet, in the marsh districts of Norfolk and Suffolk which had not cause to mourn each day its newly dead. Brought over sea by some ship from an infected continental port, the plague first attacked the coast towns ; but it soon spread along the river valleys, village being linked to village, ' closer and closer every day, in one ghastly chain of death '. When Bishop Bateman of Norwich, who was abroad at the time of the outbreak, landed at Yarmouth, the first news he heard was that his brother, Sir Bartholomew Bateman, whose home was at Gillingham, had fallen a victim to the dread scourge. At Bungay, the prioress of the Benedictine nunnery died, and the bishop, when he hastened to Gillingham, was called upon to institute a new prioress. During the ensuing twenty days a hundred clergy were admitted to cures made vacant by death. A little later the Abbot of St. Benet-at-Holm was numbered among the victims ; and at Hickling, where was a priory founded by Theobald de Valoins, only one canon survived. Dr. Jessopp, whose careful researches among old parish rolls and other documents have enabled him to present a vivid picture of East Anglia during this terrible time, asks, ' Who can adequately realize the horrors of that awful summer ? In the desolate swamps through which the sluggish Bure crawls reluctantly to mingle its waters with the Yare ; by the banks of the Waveney, where the little Bungay nunnery had been

a refuge for the widow, the forsaken, or the devout for centuries . . . among the ooze and sedge and chill loneliness of the Broads, where the tall reeds wave and whisper, and all else is silent—the glorious buildings with their sumptuous churches were little better than centres of contagion. From the stricken towns people fled to the monasteries, lying away there in their seclusion, lonely, favoured of God. If there was hope anywhere, it must be there. As frightened widows and orphans flocked to these havens of refuge, they carried the Black Death with them ; and when they dropped death-stricken at the doors, they left the contagion behind them as their only legacy.’

It is a gloomy picture, and difficult to associate with the charming hamlets, sparkling Broads, flower-spangled meadows, and bird-haunted reed beds and copses amid which sails the summer voyager on Broadland waterways. One is glad to forget it, or to remind one’s self that the days have long gone by when the conditions of life in England were such as to favour the spreading of dreadful plagues. But one cannot forget that so downtrodden were the Norfolk peasantry at that time, that it is not surprising they had sunk into a state of such callous indifference that their houses were worse than modern cattle-stalls, and constituted hot-beds for the breeding of disease. As Langland says, the lords treated the husbandmen and labourers in such a way, ‘that us loathed the lyf’. The system of forced labour was keenly resented. Although after the plague the value of the hind’s labour had doubled, statutes were passed compelling him to work at the same wages he had received before it. If he fled from service and was captured, he was branded on the forehead for his ‘crime’. So it is little wonder that the ‘vermin’, as Froissart calls them, grew restless through brooding over their wrongs, and although Church and State were against them, determined to strike a blow for freedom. Contemporaneously with Wat Tyler’s insurrection in Kent, and Jack Straw’s in Suffolk, the Norfolk rustics revolted. They appointed as their leader John Litester, a Norwich man, who led them to Norwich and afterwards through the county, where many knights and gentlemen were glad for a time to render them service and so to escape ill-treatment at their hands. No doubt they indulged in great excesses, for John

Litester was not a strong man who could keep them under control, or help them to gain the ends they had in view. For a time they were masters of the situation, and it was not until Bishop Henry le Spencer collected a force and marched against them that they were overpowered and compelled to retreat. They then abandoned Norwich, which they had plundered, and fell back on North Walsham, where they encamped on a heath outside the town, and tried to make a stand. But Bishop le Spencer vigorously attacked them, and, after a sharp battle, dispersed them and captured their leader. The slain, it is said, were buried on the battlefield, and a stone cross which stands beside the Norwich road is believed to mark the spot where they lie. The King of the Commons, as the leader styled himself, was hanged and quartered, and the quarters set up on his house at Norwich, and in London, Yarmouth, and Lynn.

Then the hinds—the men by whose labour the lords of the manors grew rich, and by whose embanking and ditching many thousand acres of the East Norfolk fens were being transformed into grazing lands—were kept in submission for over a century; but in 1549 there was another and far more serious rising in Norfolk, under the leadership of Robert Kett, a Wymondham tanner. The grievances of which the insurgents complained were very like those under which the hinds of Richard II's reign had laboured; but their chief cause of complaint was the frequent enclosing of the common-lands on which they had kept their geese and swine. Among them, however, were many of the men of the Broadland marshes, and in the petition which Kett sent to the king we find it asked that 'redegrounde and meadowe-grounde may be at such price as they were in the first yere of Kyng henry the VII'; that 'all marshysshe that ar holden of the Kyng's majestie by ffire rent or of eny other, may be ageyn at the price they were in the first yere of King henry the VII'; and that 'Ryvers may be ffire and comon to all men for fyshyng and passage.' To the men of the marshes it seemed a hard thing that they should be grudged a mess of roach or bream when they and their wives and children were starving, and that they should be debarred from earning a little money by cutting and selling the wild reeds which grew by the waterside. But the king, we learn,



was indignant that such a petition should be sent to him ; and after the Earl of Warwick had slain thousands of Norfolk peasants in a battle on Mousehold Heath, near Norwich, Kett and other leaders of the insurgents met with the common fate of sixteenth-century reformers.

But while the peasantry remained little better than serfs, crouching, like whipped hounds, at the feet of the lords of the manors, the towns on the borders of Broadland were becoming important centres of industry. At Norwich and Worstead a large number of Flemings had settled, and were making these places famous for their woollen manufactures ; Aylsham had become a thriving centre of linen-working ; while Yarmouth, which was still at loggerheads with Norwich and Lowestoft about port dues and privileges, was, at the end of the fourteenth century, surrounded by ' a fair high wall embattled and most magnificently towered and turretted '. That such extensive fortifications were constructed, testifies to Yarmouth's growing importance ; it was, in fact, the chief port on the east coast, and prosperous not only on account of its increasing fishing industry, but because its situation at the mouth of the estuary of the three principal rivers of Broadland enabled it to supply many places in the interior with imported goods. Its merchants rapidly became wealthy, and contributed considerable sums towards the enlarging and beautifying of Lozinga's Norman church, where Roger of Haddiscoe, who was prior of St. Olave's in 1370, erected a costly and elaborate rood loft, which screened the high altar from the nave. In Norwich there were several flourishing monastic houses, and the cathedral was being enlarged and adorned through the efforts of the bishops of the diocese.

The fifteenth century saw the building, on the border of the Caister marshes, of Sir John Fastolff's great brick castle. Sir John was a famous soldier, and a descendant of a family which had established itself at Yarmouth in the reign of Edward I. After serving Thomas of Lancaster, second son of Henry IV, he was present at the taking of Harfleur, and became one of the governors of that town. At Agincourt, Caen, and Rouen he greatly distinguished himself, and afterwards was appointed successively governor of the Bastille, senechal, lieutenant, and

regent of Normandy, and governor of Anjou and Maine. He was a very wealthy man, possessing houses in London, Norwich, and Yarmouth, and when he built Caister Castle he made it one of the largest and finest buildings in England ; but he was an old man when it was completed, and died after occupying it a few years. He was buried in the abbey church of St. Benet-at-Holm. The castle then came into the possession of the Pastons, from whom the Duke of Norfolk took it by force ; but on the death of the duke they regained possession and held it until 1599, when it was sold to one of their creditors. Since then it has gradually fallen into its present ruined state ; but there is enough left of its walls and towers to indicate what a fine place it was in Fastolff's day. Among the manors held by Sir John was that of Blickling, near Aylsham. He sold it to Sir Geoffry Boleyn, a wealthy Lord Mayor of London, and its manor house became an early home of the ill-fated Anne Boleyn. This house has vanished, but on its site stands the finest Jacobean house in Norfolk. Vanished, too, is that stately hall at Oxnead which Clement Paston, a distinguished naval commander of the reign of Henry VIII, built, and in which King Charles II was sumptuously entertained ; but in the hall and gardens at Blickling can be seen some of its ornamental work, and also some of that with which Sir John Fastolff adorned his Caister home.

While most of the towns on the borders of Broadland were growing fast, Lowestoft seems to have experienced many vicissitudes of fortune. These were chiefly due to its disputes with Yarmouth concerning the herring fisheries ; for these disputes led to the granting and revoking of several charters. But there is little interest attaching to these sordid squabbles, and as, after the blocking up of the great Norfolk estuary, they referred only to the herrings caught at sea, they scarcely come within the scope of a book dealing with Broadland.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century most of the swamps bordering the Broadland rivers had been drained, and the marshy pastures into which they were transformed were a source of considerable profit to those who owned or hired them. Still, here and there, there were fenny tracts where the bearded titmouse—that pretty little fen bird—abounded, and amid



which, during his residence in Norfolk, Sir Thomas Browne found many of the birds mentioned in his Norfolk list. Wild-fowl decoying had become a fruitful source of revenue to the dwellers on the shores of the Broads, where, as Sir Thomas tells us, duck, widgeon, and teal were plentiful ; and he adds that there was also a ' great store of otters ' among the ' rivers, great broads, and carrs ', and that they destroyed large quantities of fish. King Charles I, we learn, was supplied with herons from Reedham, where there is still a heronry ; and peewits were so plentiful around Horsey that cartloads of them were brought into Norwich, and the country people used their eggs in puddings.

## CHAPTER II

### OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF BROADLAND (continued)

PLEASURE-SEEKERS who lived beyond the borders of East Anglia did not discover Broadland until about sixty years ago. Since then nearly all writers about the district have expressed surprise that its charms and beauties so long remained unrecognized. But Norfolk and Suffolk folk, in spite of all that has been said to the contrary, were well aware of the delights of cruising on the slow-winding, peaceful rivers, and angling and wild-fowling on the Broads. Long before the Dissolution, the abbots of St. Benet-at-Holm entertained their distinguished guests with falconry on the Cowholm marshes ; and who can doubt that the monks of Langley, St. Olave's, and St. Benet's spent many days in fishing the streams which flowed beside their monasteries ? That the people of Yarmouth in the seventeenth century were no more in the habit of taking their pleasures sadly than they are to-day, and that they were quite aware how much pleasure was to be enjoyed on the inland waters, is evident from an account of the proceedings at the annual inquest of the river liberties, contained in the journal of the Rev. Rowland Davies, a famous divine of his day. The bailiffs of Yarmouth, it should be explained, at an early period in the history of the town, claimed a right to levy on fishermen a small toll for permission to establish fishing stations on the lower waters of the rivers Yare, Bure, and Waveney. This right, often disputed by the riparian owners, was enforced on the annual ' inquest ' day. On August 7th 1689, writes the reverend diarist, ' I broke fast with Mr. Bailiff England, and about nine o'clock went with him on board a wherry made in the form of a barge. As we marched three drums were beat, and as many colours flourished before us all along the street ; and as we went up the water in each of our



MARK COCK

*Mark Cock, watercolor.*



wherries, a drum beat at the head and a colour was flourished at the stern of our boat. We were attended by over twenty other lesser boats full of people, and if the seamen were at home and dared appear, I was assured we should have had double the number, as was usual. The first boat that led the way was full of young men in white, with caps made like those of our grenadiers. After followed our boat with the king's colours on the mast ; then another alike in all things, wherein was the other bailiff ; after which two wherries followed each other [!], having the arms of the town for their flag, in each of which was one of the foremen, and the quest for each end of the town ; they being persons sworn in the nature of a grand jury, to an inquiry into all the abuses and all the privileges of the town, and make presentments as they find occasion.' Manship, the Yarmouth historian, who also gives an account of this ceremony, adds that the inquest was attended with ' banners and ensigns displayed, sometimes with sound of trumpets, beating of drums, playing of fifes, and otherwhiles sweetly singing ' ; and that the bailiffs carried with them scales and measures to ascertain whether the fishermen's nets were of a lawful size and mesh. After crossing Breydon, one of the bailiffs' barges went up the Waveney as far as St. Olave's, while the other, by way of the Yare, reached Hardley Cross. On their return and meeting at Breydon there was ' a stir in firing guns, huzzas, and drinking healths, etc. ; and so we returned in the evening as we went out '.

This annual inquest seems to have been a lively festival and there is little doubt that, if it survived, it would be very popular with Yarmouth's summer visitors, for whom its gun-firing, huzzaing, and health-drinking would have a great fascination. It was looked upon as one of the most important civic events of the year. The mayors of Norwich and Yarmouth, in their state barges, met at Hardley Cross, the limit of their respective jurisdictions over the Yare. There the Norwich town clerk, standing beside the old cross on the river bank at the mouth of the Chet, made the following proclamation : <sup>1</sup> ' Oyez ! oyez ! oyez ! If there be any manner of person

<sup>1</sup> Several attempts have been made to explain the words ' absume ' and ' purfy ' in this proclamation. Mr. J. H. Druery, who published some

that will absume, purfy, implead, or prosecute any action, suit, plaint, or plea for any offence, trespass, or misdemeanour, done or committed upon the King's Majesty's River of Wensum, let him repair unto the Right Worshipful Mr. Mayor and the Worshipful Sheriff of the City of Norwich, for the redress thereof, and he shall be heard. God save the King.' A similar proclamation was read by the Yarmouth town clerk with reference to the waters below Hardley Cross, and the barges then went down on to Breydon, where a kind of regatta was held. Dr. Sayers, who witnessed one of these jollifications, relates that on such occasions 'all the many pleasure boats kept on these rivers assemble; the commercial craft [probably the wherries] is in requisition to stow spectators, to waft music, to vend refreshments: such of the shipping as ascends above the Yarmouth drawbridge is moored within ken; there are sailing matches, rowing matches, and spontaneous evolutions of vessels of all sorts, a dance of ships, their streamers flying and their canvas spread. It is a fair afloat, where the voice of revelry resounds from every gliding tent. And when the tide begins to fall, and to condense this various fleet into the narrower waters, and the bridge and quays and balconies and windows of Yarmouth are thronged with innumerable spectators—and boys have climbed the masts and rigging of the moored ships—adding to the crowd on shore a crowd above—and the gathering boats mingle their separate concerts in one chorus of jollity—and guns fire—and loyalty and liberty shout with rival glee—and the setting sun inflames the whole lake, the scene becomes surpassingly impressive, exhilarating, and magnificent.'

But while residents in the district were beginning to disport themselves on the Broads and rivers, strangers were little impressed by East Norfolk's level lowlands and sluggish streams. Miss Celia Fiennes, an adventurous lady, who in the seventeenth century took a ride on horseback through many parts of England, entered the Waveney valley by way of

interesting notes on the ceremony, says they are Norman, 'absume' a corruption of 'absoudre', to absolve, acquit, or discharge; 'purfy' derived from 'par-faire', to perfect or complete. There is an old story told in Norfolk that a Norwich town clerk was once asked what he would do if some one expressed a desire to 'absume' and 'purfy'. 'I should tell him to go and do it,' was the reply.



Beccles. Having crossed a wooden bridge, she found herself, she writes, on low flat grounds, which were often overflowed by the river, 'so that the road lay under water, which is very unsafe for strangers to pass, by reason of the holes and quick-sands and loose bottom'. The houses in Beccles, she observed, were built of old timber and plasterwork; in fact, there were no good houses in the town except Sir R. Rich's and one or two others. Still the town even then ranked third in importance in Suffolk, only Ipswich and Bury being larger and more populous.

In 1722, however, Daniel Defoe gave a better account of the East Norfolk marshlands. The river Yare, he wrote, passes through the largest and richest tract of meadows in England, stretching from Norwich to Yarmouth, and extended by the marshes on the banks of the rivers Waveney and 'Thyrn'. On this vast tract of meadows were fed an immense number of black cattle, which not only supplied Norwich, Yarmouth, and the country adjacent with beef, but also great quantities to the London markets. It was also particularly worthy of remark, he added, that the greater part of the Scots cattle which yearly came to England was brought on to these lush marshes, where they fed eagerly and grew 'monstrously fat'. He was told, and had good reasons to believe, that above forty thousand of these Scots 'runts' were fed in the county every year, 'and most of them in the said marshes between Norwich, Beccles, and Yarmouth'. The town of Yarmouth he considered better built than Norwich, and for wealth, trade, and advantage of situation 'infinitely superior' to that city; its quay was the finest in England, if not in Europe, and along it stood some 'very magnificent buildings', some of the merchants' houses having the appearance of 'palaces rather than the dwelling-houses of private men'.

During the latter years of the eighteenth century the sea on several occasions invaded Broadland, usually, as in the earlier centuries, in the neighbourhood of Horsey, where there have always been weak spots in the sandhills. During one of these floods a breach two hundred yards wide was made, and the salt water, 'poisoning' the rivers even so far inland as Norwich, killed great quantities of fresh-water fish. After 1791,

however, the sea was kept out for over a century, and the men of the marshes had some reason for believing that they would never again be troubled by any inundations worse than the ordinary rain-floods. But in the winter of 1897 the Horsey sandhills were again unable to withstand the surf scour, and, winning its way into the narrow bed of the shrunk Hundred Stream, the sea soon poured over the adjoining marshlands. Fortunately the hundred miles or so of dykes which drain these marshes were almost empty at the time, or, as an old marshman observed, no one knows 'what mightn't ha' happened'. For nearly three hours the sea swept in through the breach it had made, and often the waves broke on the landward side of the sandhills. Hundreds of rabbits, which had their burrows in the warren lying between the sandhills and the marshes, were drowned; and for days afterwards the gulls and hooded crows gorged themselves with the dead fish in the dykes. After the sea had gone down, nearly 200,000 tons of salt water were pumped off the Horsey marshes in about thirty hours.

But in spite of inundations the work of reclamation has for centuries gone steadily on. Acre by acre swamps have been turned into rush marshes and rush marshes into grazing grounds. Along the banks of the chief rivers 'walls' have been raised to protect and preserve the reclaimed lands, and scores of steam and wind pump-mills, discharging the water out of hundreds of miles of dykes, quickly free the marshes of rain-floods. For centuries the Broadsmen have reaped an annual harvest of reeds by the riversides and around the Broad; while hundreds of wherries have sailed up and down the rivers, carrying cargoes of corn, coal, and timber between the coast and the inland towns. At the beginning of the last century another kind of craft traded between the chief towns of Broadland. These were called keels, and it was written of them about ninety years ago, that they were 'in a great measure peculiar to the navigation between Norwich and Yarmouth, and are supposed to be superior to the small craft upon any other stream in England, as carrying a larger burden and being worked at a smaller expense. They have but one mast, which lets down by a windlass placed at the head, carry one large square sail, are covered close by hatches, and have a cabin

superior to many coasting vessels, in which it is not unusual for the keelman and his family to live. They are never navigated by more than two men, and often by a man and his wife, or one man and a boy. The usual passage for a loaded keel is from twelve to sixteen hours ; when light, they perform it in five hours. . . . This kind of craft carry grain of every sort grown in the county—flour, etc.—to Yarmouth, besides the goods manufactured at Norwich for foreign markets. In return, from Yarmouth they bring coals, grocery, ironmongery, fir-timber, wine, spirits, etc.’ In the Norwich Castle Museum there is a picture of one of these keels, which were larger and heavier craft than the wherries, and had their masts placed amidships.

The reference to the exporting of Norwich-manufactured goods reminds me that even at the time when the foregoing words were written, Norwich’s importance as a manufacturing centre had begun to decline. How great was once that importance can be gathered from another writer’s words. The Norwich travellers, he writes, have penetrated throughout Europe ; ‘ their pattern cards were exhibited in every principal town, from the frozen plains of Moscow to the milder climes of Lisbon, Seville, Naples, Rio Janeiro, and Buenos Ayres. The Russian peasant decorated himself with his sash of gaudy calimanco, and the Spanish hidalgo was sheltered under his light cloak of Norwich camlet. The introduction of Norwich articles into Spain soon made the manufacturer ample amends for the capricious turns of fashion in his own country. The taste of foreign nations was now consulted. The gravity of the Spaniard was suited in his plain but finely textured camlets ; the loom was taught to imitate the handiworks of Flora, and the most garish assemblage of colours of every dye satisfied the vanity of the Bohemian and Suabian female. The great fairs of Frankfort, Leipsic, and Salerno were thronged with purchasers of these commodities. Norwich was then crowded with its looms. Every winter’s evening exhibited to the traveller entering its walls the appearance of a general illumination ; and from twenty miles round the village weavers resorted to it with the produce of their industry.’ Such a passage as this, grandiose as it is, helps to give us some idea of the scene

presented by one of the chief rivers of Broadland at the time of Norwich's greatest prosperity ; for it was by way of the winding Yare that the camlets, the gaudy calimancos, and the brilliant-hued cloths which delighted the eyes of the Bohemian and Suabian beauties were borne to the coast for export to foreign lands.

But early in the last century the railway came to Norfolk, and much of the carrying trade was taken out of the wherry-men's hands. Since then, the traveller has been able to cross in a few minutes wide stretches of marshland which previously were almost untraversable except by the men who lived on them and knew the winding footpaths and the mazy courses of the dykes. Still, the railway did not rob the wherry-men of all their means of livelihood ; and at the present time there are still a good many wherries to be seen on the Broadland rivers. It was for their convenience that, in 1831, a three-mile-long canal was cut to connect the Yare at Reedham with the Waveney at Herringfleet, making it possible for them to make the voyage between Norwich and Lowestoft without sailing round by Breydon. A few years previous to the opening of this New Cut, a scheme was conceived for extending Lowestoft Harbour by cutting through the land barrier which existed between the sea and Lake Lothing ; and after much opposition from the people of Yarmouth, a Bill for making Lake Lothing navigable to sea-borne vessels was carried through Parliament. On June 3rd 1831 this work was so far advanced that the sea was let into the lake ; and two large yachts, the *Ruby* and *Georgiana*, each drawing about nine feet of water, passed through the newly made cutting into the new inner harbour. The mingling of the salt water with the fresh water of the lake was attended with some curious phenomena, and a night or two after the channel was opened Lake Lothing was brilliantly phosphorescent. Its waters were thickly covered with ' the bodies of pike, carp, perch, bream, roach, and dace, multitudes of which were carried into the ocean and thrown afterwards on the beach, most of them having been bitten in two by the dogfish which abound in the bay '. And the ' singular fact ' is recorded that a twenty-pound pike containing an entire herring was picked up at the Mutford end of the lake.



The completion of a chain of waterways—Lake Lothing, Oulton Broad, Oulton Dyke, the Waveney, and Breydon—connecting Lowestoft with Yarmouth, and the fact that the Waveney was about this time connected with the Yare by the making of the New Cut, may have had something to do with what has been called the ‘discovery’ of the Norfolk Broads. At any rate, since about 1840, pleasure-seekers’ attention has been constantly turned towards Broadland. True, at first strangers only came into the district in small numbers, and as there were then few sailing craft suited to inland cruising to be hired, and there was practically no accommodation for visitors at the marshland inns, it is not surprising that many of these strangers, after enduring considerable discomfort, went away little impressed by its beauties. Even the Rev. Richard Lubbock, who knew the district well, and whose *Fauna of Norfolk* is deservedly valued by naturalists, was of opinion that the Broads and rivers had ‘little to interest the seeker after picturesque beauty’, though he admitted that ‘nothing was pleasanter than a summer expedition, for a few days, to some of the larger Broads’. But the strangers who visited the Broads had to do so in cabinless boats, so that there was no shelter for them when they were overtaken by rain-storms; and, perhaps, with empty stomachs and the wind against them, they found themselves miles away from village or inn. So for a while ardent anglers, gunners, and naturalists only were enthusiastic about Broadland; people who disliked ‘roughing it’, after a day or two’s discomfort, or a thorough drenching, hastened back to Norwich, Yarmouth, or Lowestoft, and said uncomplimentary things about those persons who had deluded them by speaking of the delights of the Broads,

George Borrow, perhaps, had he been so minded, could have written a book about Broadland, which would have shown wherein the charm of the district lay; for he dwelt many years beside Oulton Broad, and it has been said of him that he could ‘draw more poetry from a wide-spreading marsh with its straggling rushes than from the most beautiful scenery, and would stand and look at it with rapture’. Charles Kingsley, too, felt that the beauty of the fens was as the beauty of the sea, ‘of boundless expanse and freedom’: he could have done

for Broadland what he did for the Cambridgeshire Fens. But it remained, so far as I can ascertain, for Mr. G. Christopher Davies to give to the world the first satisfactory description of Broadland life. True, some years before the appearance of *Norfolk Broads and Rivers*, Nall, a somewhat neglected Yarmouth historian, had said that the marshlands around Breydon presented landscapes equalling those depicted by Potter, Cuyp, Hobbima, Ruysdael, and Vanderneer; but Mr. Davies, in his accounts of his cruising on the Yare, Bure, and Waveney and their tributaries, surprised many who were unfamiliar with the district, by telling them that Broadland had not to rely entirely on its wide vistas, quiet waters, and gorgeous sunrises and sunsets for its picturesque effects. He told them that Wroxham, Barton, and some of the smaller Broads were not, like Rockland, simply reed-fringed meres in the midst of level marshlands, beautiful only when the reeds were mirrored by the still surface of the water or the ripples sparkled in the sunlight; but that they were bordered by pleasant woodlands, whose fresh green in early summer and glorious hues in autumn made them as lovely as many of the leafy backwaters of the upper Thames. Weaving a spell of enchantment about his readers, he led them beside banks fragrant with water-mint and purple with loosestrife, where sedge-warblers sang incessantly, reed-buntings twittered, brilliant-hued butterflies fluttered, and dragon-flies darted in the sunlight. He wrote of summer nights spent on Wroxham, Salhouse, and Hickling, when his yacht seemed to be floating in air between two star-spangled skies; of days passed in the company of Broadland anglers, gunners, eel-catchers, and decoymen; of charming waterside hamlets whose inhabitants spoke the broadest of 'broad Norfolk'; and at all times he was ready to chat pleasantly of the myths, folk-lore, habits and customs of the men of the marshes. And when he had described the indisputable charms of the upper waters of the Yare and Bure, he even had the courage to confirm Nall's statements about the lower reaches of those rivers—at least, to assert that they were not without their elements of the picturesque. In this assertion he soon had the support of Sir John Lubbock, who, in his *Beauties of Nature*, wrote that the Broadland streams are like





MARSHLAND NEAR BARTON



'rivers wandering in the meadows on a holiday. They have often no natural banks, but are bounded by dense growths of tall grasses, bulrushes, reeds, and sedges, interspersed with the spikes of the purple loosestrife, willow-herb, hemp-agrimony, and other flowers, while the fields are very low and protected by dykes, so that the red cattle appear to be browsing below the level of the water. And as the rivers take most unexpected turns, the sailing boats often seem as if they were in the middle of the fields.'

People of all sorts and conditions, from all parts of England, no sooner heard of these delights, than they were anxious to enjoy them. Oulton, Wroxham, Hickling, Ormesby were words continually in people's mouths; and the natives of these places, realizing that they were discovered, speedily learnt how to cater for holiday folk craving for new scenes and pleasures. So that now there is no lack of craft of every kind suited to the navigating of Broadland waterways, and all through the summer the white sails of yachts are more numerous than the black sails of wherries on the Yare, Bure, and Waveney. On board the larger of these craft every possible comfort and convenience is provided; so that 'roughing it', after the fashion of the early adventurers on the Broads, is a thing of the past. But the visitors who content themselves with what they can see of Broadland from a yacht's deck can never become really acquainted with the Broads and Broadland life. To gain a real knowledge of these, they must, to some extent, 'rough it' as the early adventurers did: trudge the river walls; associate with the eel-catchers, marshmen, reed-cutters, and Breydon gunners; explore the dykes unnavigable by yachts, and the swampy rush marshes where the lapwings and redshanks nest; spend days with the Broadman in his punt, and nights with the eel-catcher in his houseboat; crouch among the reeds to watch the acrobatic antics of the bearded titmice, and fraternize with the natives at the staithes and ferry inns. If the stranger in Broadland is unwilling to do these things, he must rest content with the outward aspect of the district and second-hand knowledge of its inner life. But there must always be many whom lack of time, opportunity, or inclination will debar from becoming

intimately acquainted with the scenery, inhabitants, archaeology, history, sport, and wild life of this most delightful and interesting district ; and it is for such persons, as well as for the guidance and information of those who have ample time for exploration and investigation, that this book has been written.

In concluding this rough outline of the history of Broadland, it is necessary to say something about a matter which in late years has attracted much attention and excited some indignation. I refer to the action of certain riparian owners who have denied the right of the public to have access to waters which from time immemorial have been looked upon as public highways. The trouble seems to have had its origin in the Enclosure Acts and Awards, by which, some hundred years ago, some of the Broadlands and much of the wet marshland adjoining the Broadlands and rivers were allotted to neighbouring landowners. As at that time the Broadlands had not been 'discovered' by holiday-makers and yachting folk, this allotment was permitted to be made almost without protest on the part of the public. The wherry-men were, to a certain extent, considered, and in some instances their right of way was preserved to them ; but in other cases Broadlands were handed over, almost unconditionally, to private owners. Since the district has become a popular playground, the restrictions enforced or attempted by some of the riparian owners have been greatly resented, have led to unpleasant disputes, and occasionally not only visitors but residents in Broadland have been proceeded against for fishing in or shooting over certain Broadlands.

At the present time the public is denied access to Hoveton Great and Little Broadlands, Woodbastwick or Decoy Broad, Belaugh Broad, and parts of Ranworth, Filby, and Rollesby Broadlands. The owners of Ranworth, South Walsham, Salhouse, and Salhouse Little Broadlands claim the right to exclude the public, except in so far that there is a right of way to certain staithes. The fishing is preserved on the Salhouse Broadlands, Hickling, Horsey, Barton, Wroxham, Sutton, and Surlingham Broadlands, and part of South Walsham.

Until what is known as the Hickling Broad case was decided in the Supreme Courts, few attempts were made to debar the public from fishing on the Broads. In that case the riparian owners sought to take from the public all rights of sport on or passage over Hickling Broad. The decision of the Court was that 'the rights of fishing and shooting were vested in the riparian owners to whom the Broad had been allotted under an Enclosure Award, but that the right of passage and navigation is in the public, and without limitation to any particular channel'. It appears, however, that if the judge had been satisfied that Hickling Broad is tidal water (as it undoubtedly is) the public would have retained their sporting rights as well as those of passage and navigation; but on the evidence adduced he came to the conclusion that the Broad is not tidal. As a matter of fact, all the principal Broads are tidal; but the mistaken judgment given in the Hickling case has resulted in fishing and shooting being prohibited on several of them, and others being closed to the public. That I am justified in calling the judge's decision mistaken will be admitted by every one who has any acquaintance with Hickling; but I may quote in support of my assertion a passage from a letter sent by the late Mr. Walter Rye to the Press. He says that in the Hickling case the plaintiffs argued that the regular rise and fall of the water was 'only caused by the salt tide pushing the water up and (letting it) down, and that this, therefore, did not prove a tide, as the water was not wholly and regularly salt. How utterly absurd this argument was, did not apparently strike the magistrates, who could hardly have denied that the river Thames at Putney, which has a rise and fall of ten feet or more, is tidal, though it does not contain any salt water at all. It is only a question of degree—a tide is a tide if of inches or feet, and Rigby in the Hickling case advised me that half an inch of proved regular tide was as good as a foot. The presence or absence of salt water has nothing to do with proving or disproving a tide.' Mr. Rye, in answer to the statement that the public are 'forcible would-be usurpers' of the riparian owners' rights, added that he thought 'the boot is entirely on the other leg. . . . Bryant's map of the county,



taken in 1826, shows Walsham Staithe (which it would hardly have done if it had been a private one), the now improperly closed entrance to Wroxham, and the two entrances at the ends of Hoveton Broad, through which the trading wherries used to make their alternative course up and down the river if the wind suited them better than on the main river. Since then the adjoining owners have been continually encroaching on the rights of the public.'

However, despite restrictions here and there, the Broads district is spacious enough to provide its cruising-folk with Broads and other waterways on which they can usually sail, motor, or row without being in any degree crowded, while for those seeking rest and seclusion amid pleasant scenes the upper reaches of the rivers, and some of the less frequented Broads, still provide the peace and quiet sought for. The angler, too, has nowhere in the district far to seek for plenty of fishing if he obtains the licence for which the Norfolk Fishery Board makes a very low charge and he is content to conform with the regulations as to close season and the standard sizes below which all fish taken must be immediately returned to the water.

'Old timers' may lament that the days are gone by when a comparatively few yachtsmen and sportsmen had almost a monopoly of the pleasure to be found on the Broads; but on the whole the transformation of the district into a popular national playground cannot be regretted when one sees what a number of holiday-makers annually find enjoyment and reinvigorated health on its waterways. True, the trippers on crowded river-steamers and in motor-coaches may at times conduct themselves in ways out of harmony with the restful charm of Broadland scenery, and so may rob quieter folk of much of their pleasure in it; but there are still plenty of places into which the tripper is rarely tempted to penetrate, and there all, or nearly all, of the old-time restfulness and interest can be found and enjoyed. Here and there villas and bungalows built on the slopes of the river-bordering uplands have marred their attractiveness; but fortunately most of the marshland is free of such unsightliness, as, too, are many of the Broads. The growing consciousness of the need for



preserving as much as possible of the surviving charm of our beautiful English country-side will probably prevent much further disfigurement of the beauties of the Broads district.

During the years of the Great War the Broads district, owing to its nearness to the then unrestful east coast, proved less attractive to rest-seeking holiday-makers and wearied war-workers than the south and west coasts; but with the declaration of peace there was an immediate revival of its popularity, and each succeeding year has seen a marked increase in the number of cruising craft on its waters. A strange sight on Oulton Broad until the end of the war, was that presented by scores of Belgian trawling smacks moored there, these being the vessels in which thousands of Belgian refugees arrived at Lowestoft when the Germans were marching upon Ostend. Yarmouth and Lowestoft, the two ports of Broadland, became important naval bases during the war: at Lowestoft alone, upwards of a thousand Fleet auxiliaries, including mine-sweepers, patrol boats, and 'mystery' ships, were built or equipped for service, and from the villages of the district there were drawn many of the men, who, on board mine-sweepers and drifter patrols, took such an active part in defeating the efforts of enemy mine-layers and submarines. Most of the trawlers which swept up the mines in the Dardanelles were fitted out for that purpose at Lowestoft, and, by the strange chance of war, hundreds of the local fishermen found themselves steering their little steam drifters from the familiar home ports to Levantine waters and a base near the site of ancient Troy. These were the men, usually North Sea fishermen, who formed part of the famous Dover Patrol, who, with their little six-pounder guns, 'put up a fight' against the Austrian Fleet, and who, scattered in their drifters all about the Mediterranean and the home waters, helped so well in safeguarding the sea-borne transport and commerce of Britain and her Allies. With the outbreak of war they soon proved that they had inherited the spirit of their viking forefathers.

### CHAPTER III

## SPRING AND SUMMER IN BROADLAND

### SPRING

**I**N spring the natives of the district and a few enthusiasts for cruising and wild life have Broadland almost entirely to themselves. In this season you may row or sail for miles along the rivers and encounter no other craft than the wherries or little tugs towing lighters, while on Hickling, Horsey Mere, Barton, and some other Broads you may spend days together in April and early May and scarcely see a boat afloat or a human being. This is not surprising, for the spring weather is far too treacherous for extended cruising, and it is only on those few delightful days when the sun shines brightly and the wind blows from the south or west that a few small sailing boats are launched from the 'hard' or leave for a while their winter moorings. The nights and early morning hours, too, are often very cold, and if one has not a snug cabin into which to retreat at a moment's notice, the sudden rain squalls of spring will soon drench one to the skin. Yet for the botanist or student of wild life who goes abroad and afloat prepared for weather changes, the spring days are far too few and brief; for not only the uplands around the river valleys, but the dykes, reed-beds, alder and sallow carrs, ronds, and rush marshes each day show some fresh sign of re-awakening life. And this in spite of the fact, which I think no one who knows the district will deny, that signs of spring are later in revealing themselves on the lowlands of Broadland than in the woodlands, among the cornfields, on the roadside banks, and in gardens. Long after the blackthorn blossoms have faded, only last year's withered reeds are mirrored by Broad and river; for though the 'colts' may be coming up, they are hidden by the dense jungles of amber culms.



SPARROW-HAWK CALLING HER MATE



But by the time the sedge-warblers are back in the reed-beds, and the dykes are full of amorous frogs, there is much to tempt one to take a cruise on the rivers or a ramble along the river walls. Every marsh and swampy rond is then bright with golden clusters of marsh marigolds ; on the sun-warmed sides of the walls yellow coltsfoot has pushed its way up through the clods, and purple patches of dead nettle attract the early roving bees. On the boggy lands green rushes are gradually hiding the withered growths of rush and sedge ; the silken sallow catkins are sending out their yellow anthers, and the ruddy bog myrtle fills the air with its sweet, strong scent. Sunward the river is agleam with flashing ripples ; elsewhere the water is as blue as the sky. As you cross the rush marshes, redshanks and peewits rise from their nesting-grounds, crying plaintively ; now and again a snipe is flushed, and uttering that strange bleating note which has gained it the name of 'summer-lamb', betakes itself to erratic flight. In almost every dyke where there is dead sedge or gladden, moor-hens are beginning to make their nests, and the loud challenge of the pugnacious cocks is heard along the riversides ; while from the shores of the larger Broads comes the harsh 'cark' of the coot. The reed beds are full of sedge-warblers, playing the mocking-bird to sparrow, thrush, and finch ; occasionally a louder, quicker 'chucking' tells of the presence of a reed-warbler. By the time the reed-warblers—which arrive later than the sedge-warblers—are heard, you may listen for the strange insect-like 'reeling' of the shy little grasshopper warblers, which lurk among the scrub of sweet gale and sallow and in the lush marsh grass. On the floating rafts of broken reeds and sedges, with which the wind and tide have covered the surface of some of the creeks, those dignified and graceful little dyke-rangers, the yellow wagtails, are strutting, carefully searching for crawling insects or darting their beaks at those upon the wing. In the marsh farm gardens tits and finches are busy among the fruit-buds, and the goldfinch, which is not so rare in Norfolk as in some counties where the bird-catchers are more in evidence, is often heard singing among the apple trees.

It was on an April day, when the gorse on the Herringfleet Hills was in full blaze of bloom, that I sailed down the Waveney



to St. Olave's Bridge, and moored for the night just above the old Bell Inn. The day had been warm and cloudless—almost like a fine day at the end of May—and the night was so warm that at midnight I opened my cabin window and lay in my bunk for an hour, looking out over the river. The moon had risen above the hills, and the old inn, the brush-topped willows, the cottages on the shore, and the masts of the wherries on the river, were clearly outlined, like Indian ink silhouettes, against a sky-background of star-speckled, slaty blue, while a shimmering lane of silvery light stretched from the cabin window to the dark shore. Not a breath of wind stirred the dark-plumed reeds and slender willow wands, but across the sky drifted little pearly clouds and films of mist. The curved white ironwork of the bridge—beneath which the tide was ebbing—gleamed in the moonlight like a lunar rainbow. Except for the lapping of the tide, the only sounds I heard were the crying of the redshanks on the Herringfleet marshes and the chucking of a sedge-warbler, which, in the midst of a neighbouring reed-bed, was continually bursting into song. The rower of a little gun-punt which went gliding down-stream passed under the bridge so silently that I thought he must be either the water-bailiff or some fisherman anxious to escape the bailiff's notice ; the punt with its noiselessly moving oars looked like a great black water-beetle.

The morning was as fine as the night had been. A little way above St. Olave's Bridge, a millwright was hoisting new sails on to an old wooden windmill, and all the male dwellers on the marshes for miles around—there were not a dozen of them in all—had come to assist or look on. The millman was anxious to get the mill to work, for some cattle were to be turned on to the marshes at the end of the month, and at present the dykes which his mill drained were full of flood-water. At midday the heat of the sun was more oppressive than it often is in June, and the millwright's assistants, who seemed quite content to work all day so that they might partake of the refreshment provided by a capacious wicker-bound bottle, were glad to cast aside their coats. The scene was such a busy one for the lethargic lowlands, that I stayed an hour or more watching it ; but although there was much shouting



Frank S. H. H. H.

ST. OLAVES



and hauling of ropes, the progress of the sail-hoisting was remarkably slow. An old marshman, who, like myself, was an interested spectator, remarked that it 'fared to him as how for all their shoutin' they didn't fare to git no forrarder; but seein' as how it wor th' fust time in his lifetime a mill in their parts had had new sails, he reckoned as how th' chaps what wor at work there worn't pertickler handy at it'. I noticed that a pair of moor-hens which were making a nest in a dyke not fifty yards from the mill were quite undisturbed by the hammering and shouting. With the aid of my field-glasses I could watch them dabbling about as unconcernedly as though they were the only inhabitants of the marshes. The lapwings, however, seemed very restless, and were continually rising and wheeling in the air.

As yet there were no cattle turned on to any of the marshes of that triangular tract lying between the Yare, the Waveney, and the New Cut; but when, after reaching Breydon and sailing a little way up the Yare, I moored near Banham's marsh farmstead, the old man, who had lived his life on that lonesome tract of marshland, told me that his marshes would be dry enough for the bullocks to come on to them at the end of the next week. A matter of this kind may not seem of overwhelming interest to the stranger who chats with a Broadland marshman, but he ought not to discourage the native when he happens to be in a talkative mood; for by listening patiently a little while he may gain much insight into the lives and interests of the lone-living marsh folk. Old Banham had a quip and joke for all comers, and as, during the greater part of the year, he had few visitors at his almost inaccessible farmstead, he was often glad to chat with those who came to him by way of the river or the rough marsh walls. He it was who told the River and Haven Commissioners, when they held a meeting at Reedham, that the reason why the river walls were destroyed and the marshes flooded was because the Commissioners had dyddled away the sandbank which used to stretch nearly across the mouth of Yarmouth Harbour, so that the flood-tides swept up the rivers with double the force and the water rose twice as high as it did when he was a boy. But though he told the Commissioners, he laughingly remarked,

that his hay crop is often spoilt before he can get it up, he could not persuade them to let the harbour mouth choke up again. But he did not tell them that in the days of his boyhood the hay crop of his marshes was not worth the cutting. In those days he could go down on to the swampy marshes and collect a bushel of hornpies' (green plovers') eggs in a morning. Bird protection is a matter which does not appeal to these old marshmen ; and Banham gleefully related how old Kemp, a long-legged marshman from Haddiscoe, with an empty gun so put the ' fear of death ' into the heart of Plum, the keeper who came to keep an eye on the egg-collectors, that Plum fled from the marshes and would never go near them again.

On that fine April morning I spent nearly two hours chatting with Banham. A hundred and sixty years, he said, his family had lived on the marshes around Breydon ; but from his own appearance and that of his stalwart, fair-haired sons I should say that it is ten hundred and sixty years since his ancestors first settled there, and that they were some of those Scandinavian viking raiders who gave their names to several of the hamlets in the Flegg Hundred. In course of conversation with him, I learnt that the herons at Reedham, where is their chief Broadland colony, had been much disturbed of late by the cutting down of some of the trees on which they nested. He told me, too, a tale of a gun. The gun was a heavy old weapon which had been used as a swivel gun on Breydon, and for five years it stood untouched in a corner of his house, no one thinking it was loaded. Then he sold it to a man, who put it to his shoulder and pulled the trigger while he was taking it home with him in the train. Fortunately, before pulling the trigger, he pushed the barrel out of the carriage window ; but so great was the recoil, and so scared was the man, that he nearly went out of the other window. ' That gin him a rare fright, that did ! ' We spoke about the marshland windmills. He knew of only one around Breydon that retained its original wooden cogwheels. ' How old are the mills ? ' ' Ah, that I shoun't like to say ; but I've heerd my grandfather say that they looked jist th' same in his young time as they did when he wor an owd man only three weeks off being a hundred.'

From Banham's farmstead I sailed to Reedham, entered



the New Cut, and soon reached Haddiscoe Bridge. There I landed, and strolled along the marsh dam to the village. In the plantations around the fine old Norman-towered church the fresh green of the larches pleasantly relieved the sombre foliage of the firs ; green buds were opening on the brushwood of the elm trunks, though some of the oaks, in sheltered places, still retained their last year's withered leaves. A faint odour of sweetbriar lurked in some of the lanes. In the adjoining hamlet of Toft Monks I met a woodman, who pointed out a sparrowhawk's nest in an oak tree. Until the previous day, when he saw one of the birds leaving it, he had taken it for a squirrel's drey. The Toft Monks woods were full of birds. Great tits and blue tits were busy at the buds ; in a dense conifer there were half a dozen or more long-tailed tits. Jays were continually screaming, and once I heard the laugh of a green woodpecker. A few willow warblers were singing among the undergrowth of ash wands and nut bushes, and in the fences on the borders of the woods were several redstarts and white-throats. The old woodman had a brushwood hut in the woods, where he worked all the year making hurdles and barrel hoops. A wren had a nest in a hole in the roof inside the hut, and the little bird when it flew down from its nest was in the habit of alighting on the old man's back. As I returned across Haddiscoe Dam I met Last Farman, the marshman-naturalist, who said that the marshmen had noticed that if when they cut the sets—that is, the wands or branches—of the willows they left the smallest and youngest branches, the trees died ; but if all the branches were cut off, the trees lived. He believed that when the young branches were left they drew the sap up and out of the ' wounds ' made where the larger sets had been cut off, and that the trees ' bled to death '.

A few days later, in early May, when the chestnuts and sycamores had burst into leaf, and the birches in the carrs and copses were beginning to look like large maidenhair ferns ; when the wild beaked parsley was opening its white, starry flowerets, and the dark spikes of sedge by the waterside were covered with pollen ; when the white scurvy grass was in bloom by the riverside and the cuckoo flowers gave another colour to the marshes, I sailed from Potter Heigham Bridge to Horsey

and Hickling. The weather was colder than it had been a week or two before, when I was afloat on the Waveney ; and George Applegate (whom every one who has been to Potter Heigham knows) told me it was sure to rain before the day was ' out '. But the swallows and warblers were back in their old haunts and I was minded to see them there ; so about half an hour after passing under the picturesque old bridge I was in the midst of that wild waste of reeds and water, Heigham Sounds. Except for two men, who seemed suspiciously anxious to keep themselves concealed among the reeds, and who, I am afraid, were on the watch for a certain rare and beautiful little bird which breeds there, the wild life and I had the whole Sounds to ourselves. A keen breeze was rustling the yellow reeds and ruffling the grey water, but at intervals gleams of sunlight broke through the clouds which were scudding inland from across the sea and the wild marshlands, and then the Sounds sparkled and flashed as with phosphorescent fire. Scores of little brown sand martins were fly-hawking over the rippling water, or resting and preening on the swaying reeds ; but neither they nor the swallows could have been quite happy, for little insect life was to be seen ; the may-fly was not yet abroad. The aspect of the watery wilderness through which the largest Broad is approached was more than usually primeval, and the crying of the redshanks and plovers and the bleating of the snipe only emphasized its chill loneliness. And presently darker clouds came rolling up from beyond the ragged line of Horsey sandhills and discharged a fusillade of hail, which rattled loudly among the dead reeds, and set little fountains playing all over the surface of the Sounds.

But the hailstorm was over in a few minutes, and before I had passed through the mile-and-a-half-long Old Meadow Dyke the sun was lighting up the sandhills, so that they stood out boldly and yellow against a background of sombrous cloud. The wind was much keener on the lonely mere than in the narrower Sounds, for the mere is only a few minutes' walk from the sea-shore, on which I could hear the waves beating ; so, after sailing round the little islet in its midst, and disturbing some coots which were swimming well out from the shelter of the reeds, I returned to the Sounds. Then, leaving on the left



HEIGHAM SOUNDS



the little wood in which the herons used to nest, I sailed through Whiteslea and on to Hickling. With a pale haze hiding its low shores, the waters of the Broad that morning seemed almost limitless, and the fitful wind-gusts which from time to time swept down upon me gave me little time to distinguish the mist-mantled landmarks. A great crested grebe was rocking on the slight swell the wind had set running, and let me get within about twenty yards of it ; then it dived and appeared again on the shallow water beyond the channel posts. Some of the posts, I noticed, had disappeared since the previous summer, and when I landed at Hickling Staithe I learnt that they had been broken down during the winter by the pressure of drifting ice.

From Hickling I walked by way of Ingham to Stalham. The hedge banks were yellow with primroses, red campions were beginning to bloom, and the hedges seemed full of white-throats. The doors of the fine old church at Ingham were locked, and I had not time to go in search of the keys ; so, after examining the scanty ruins of the priory, and listening to a nightingale which was singing near by, I rambled between primrose-decked banks to Stalham. And late in the afternoon, when the light of the setting sun gilded the reed- and rush-beds of Sutton Broad, I rowed down Stalham Dyke to Barton Broad, between banks heaped with sheaves of reeds and rushes ; and I passed a reed-laden raft towed by one marshman, and kept from running into the bank by another man who carried a long pole. The catkins of the sweet gale on Sutton Fen looked, at a little distance, like red berries, for their colour was that of the young lily-pads ; the alder scrub on the dyke banks was already in full leaf, though the alder trees were as yet almost leafless. Treading the quaking surface of the fen, I found the slender fronds of the graceful marsh fern unfolding amid golden clusters of marigold and lilac blossoms of lady's-smock. Cuckoos were calling from the copses ; and just before dusk came down on Barton, a sparrow-hawk silenced all the warblers in a reed-shoal by flying just above the ragged plumes of the reeds. Then the sun sank behind a bank of close-packed clouds which lay all along the western skyline, and for a few minutes the clouds were edged with smouldering



fire, while the sky above them was radiant with shafts of light.

For studying the bird life of Broadland there is no time like the spring, for the birds are not so shy then as they become later on, when the holiday folk are on every Broad and waterway. True, the bird life of the district is not what it used to be—the avocets, ruffs, and black terns are gone—but in May you may see a few spoonbills on the Breydon flats, and rarely that 'haunting voice of the marshlands', the booming of the bittern, is heard among the jungles of reed. Eighty years ago you might have seen half a dozen bitterns in a morning about Heigham Sounds and Hickling, and in recent years this bird has shown a disposition to return to its old marshland haunts. But even now Broadland is the most bird-favoured district in England, and a great number of species may be seen in a day. Marsh, reed-bed, alder carr, rond, river, and dyke, each has its special species, and to watch them and listen to their strange cries and varied songs is a constant delight. To note the trees, too, as they in turn unfold their leaf buds, and the wild flowers—the first marsh marigold in March and the first orchis in May—is always a pleasure to nature-loving 'children of the open air'. In springtime these delights are the more enjoyed because one has grown weary of leafless trees and Broadlands fringed with yellow reeds and rusty blades of sedge. The silver sheen of the sallow catkins is a sign that Nature is waking from her winter sleep, and every day gives proof that she is throwing off the lethargy into which she fell when the frosts and snows came. When the sedge-warbler's song is heard and the grass-cup nests of the redshanks are found on the rush marshes, we know that she is wide awake and will soon be decking herself with the rainbow-hued draperies of spring.

### SUMMER

The footpaths along the river walls are nearly hidden by tall, drooping grasses. Many of the dykes are almost choked up with hemlocks, frogbits, and marshwort, so that open water spaces, where the 'whirligigs' and 'skaters' can disport themselves, are few and far between. From the marshes the shrill

sound of scythe-whetting and the metallic murmur of mowing machines are heard from early morn till dusk, and a fresh fragrance—the sweet scent of new-mown hay—is in the air. Innumerable butterflies—among them handsome black and yellow swallow-tails and gorgeous red admirals—are fluttering over the meadows and along the rose-decked driftways ; over the rush marshes, now pink with orchid and ragged robin, ruddy with red rattle, and flecked with a white spray of wild parsley, beautiful little burnet moths are poising on almost invisibly beating wings. Now is the time to go in search of the lovely bell-flowered buckbean, the marsh cinquefoil, the marsh thistle, and the dainty bog pimpernel ; and to range the dykes for the curious aloe-like water-soldier, the insectivorous bladderwort, and the lovely flowering rush. For Broadland is now a great wild-flower garden : marsh, dyke, riverside, alder carr, and even the swampy rond and osier bed all have their brilliant blossoms, and the summer breeze is as laden with sweet scents as though

Nature's incense-pans had spilt,  
And shed the dews i' the air.

The nightingales are silent, but the sedge-warblers, though less seen now that the new reeds are hiding last year's yellow culms, are still singing ; and at intervals the strange 'reeling' song of the shy grasshopper warbler is heard among the marshes. The swallows are busy midge-hawking over marsh, Broad, and river ; but they have young to feed, and their dartings under the doorways of boat-houses and into the upper stories of the windmills are more frequent than they were a few weeks ago. The swifts, too, are continually circling around the windmills and over the rivers ; but sometimes they rise so high in the air as to become almost invisible. Hundreds of rooks, jackdaws, and wood pigeons are feeding on the marshes, undisturbed by the cattle grazing there ; day and night the harsh challenge of the cock pheasant is heard—for the pheasants are almost as numerous on the marshes as in the woods—as dusk approaches the 'crek-crek' of the corncrake, a bird which seems rarer now than it used to be, comes with misleading distinctness from amid the lush grass. The nights and dawns are no longer chilly, but the mists still rise from the dykes at sunset, and all

day a wavering haze of pollen-laden air veils the meadows where the grass is still unmown and undulates like a grey-green sea.

The Broadland season has begun. At Oulton, Wroxham, Thorpe, Potter Heigham, and Brundall only condemned hulks are drawn up on the boat-yards; the overhauling and refitting of yachts and launches are finished, and most of the craft afloat have cruising parties on board them. Already two or three regattas have been held, and some of the racing craft display fresh prize-flags among those which indicate earlier but well-remembered successes. Broadsmen, who all winter have been indistinguishable from the other men of the marshes, have donned close-fitting jerseys with yachts' names in red or white letters on them; the conversation at the riverside inns is all about yacht-racing and the victories of this or that famous winner. The wherry-men scan critically the new craft as they pass them on the rivers; the old men among them talk of the changes they have seen. Rivers and Broads wear a holiday aspect, which, if not so attractive to some as their spring freshness and loveliness, is inspiriting and not without its charm. At night, when the whispering of the reeds often suggests a coolness that is not felt, the glow of lamp-lit cabin windows lures the moths from the waterside wild flowers; music and laughter are heard above the lapping of water and the warblers' incessant songs.

Now is the time when those who come to Broadland for rest and quietude leave the more popular Broads and waterways and explore the upper reaches and isolated Broads. There they find what they came here for. But in spite of the district's great popularity, there are hundreds of cruisers who know so little of Broadland that they believe, when they have seen the main rivers between Norwich, Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and Wroxham, and the larger Broads, that they have exhausted its delights. A few know better, and it is they who, when the main waterways are thronged with pleasure-seekers, retire on to the quieter and less accessible upper waters and tributaries, and enjoy delights to which the majority of the river-cruisers are strangers. Some pass under Beccles Bridge, and have the Waveney between Beccles and Bungay almost entirely to



ABOVE WAYFORD BRIDGE ON THE ANT





themselves ; others cruise up the narrow Chet, and visit the old-world hamlets near which it flows ; yet others retire to the upper Bure, where, around Coltishall and Aylsham, there are enough fine old churches, Elizabethan and Jacobean halls, and pretty villages to occupy delightfully the time and attention of a visitor during the whole of a long holiday. Even the upper reaches of the Ant have their regular patrons at this season, for in a neighbourhood noted for its quaint decayed towns and villages, and famous for its memorials of the Pastons, many hours can be spent pleasantly and profitably. On and around these quiet streams, which flow through remote but pleasant places, an old-world charm still lingers, and at night, when the rattle of the mowing machines is hushed and the haymakers are gone home, one can know a peace that is very much akin to

The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is amongst the lonely hills.

The beauty and enchantment of a fine summer night in Broadland make a lasting impression even on the least impressionable natures. The golden glory of sunset fades into an amber afterglow, against which windmills, farmsteads, and alder carrs are seen in striking silhouette. The breeze which all day has filled white sails and set green reeds whispering, dies away. Over Broad, river, and marsh a sudden silence falls, broken only by the splash of a leaping fish, the cry of some night bird, the rustle of a vole in the hovers, or the creak of a rowlock of some belated angler's boat. The fragrance of the waterside wild flowers becomes stronger than it has been during the daytime ; thousands of moths begin fluttering over river, rond, and dyke. In a copse near the river a nightjar begins churring—a weird, mysterious, haunting voice of solitude and night—and presently, like a shadow, a sombre bird-shape comes out of the gloom of the copse, and flies, now silently, now with flapping wings, along the copse border. For a few moments it circles in the open, where its widespread wings are seen against the blue of the night sky ; then it vanishes, and again the strange churring, now loud, now subdued, makes the air seem vibrant and the copse haunted by some phantom of

the night. When it ceases, the night seems 'full of a watchful intentness'—Nature holds her breath while she waits to hear that haunting voice again.

Presently the moon rises—rises above a horizon as level as that of the sea—and is seen at first through a fretwork of down-bent leaves in a scanty reed-bed. Below the reeds, in the still, clear water, is another moon, which sinks as the other rises, until it is lost in a lane of silvery light which lies across the water. On the edge of the water, where the silver sheen is broken into flakes by a jungle of reeds and sedges, creamy clusters of meadow-sweet are revealed, like little wisps of suspended mist. But there is little mist abroad, and when the moon is a little way above the reeds, its light falls so brightly on the pastures that the grazing cattle cast long black shadows on the grass. Even the nightjar casts a wavering shadow—the shadow of a shadow—and little white moths rise to the surface of the river to meet those which midge-like touch the water. Every minute something which has hitherto hidden itself in gloom is revealed by the growing light—the slender mast of a wherry which vanished when the light in its cabin was extinguished, the white wall of a cottage seen between the trunks of some bushy-headed willows, a pair of swans which come out of a reedy creek, and glide slowly and wraith-like across the river. Then a bird starts singing—not the sedge-warbler, the marshman's nightingale, but a blackcap, whose mellow music sounds sweeter now that the voices of the sun-inspired songsters are hushed. For a few minutes its fluting is heard at intervals; then a plover cries like a lone, lost wanderer amid the marshes, and the blackcap goes to sleep again.

But for the stranger in Broadland such a night as this is no time for sleeping. Rather it is a time to step aboard a dinghy and row round a Broad or along a river reach, or to land for a while and stroll along the riverside or some moonlit marsh wall. On the top of the river wall what little breeze is stirring feels like the touch of velvet to the cheek, so soft, warm, and humid is it. Here the outlook is wider: windmills, carrs, and farmsteads miles away are revealed by the moonlight. Marvellous are the reflections in some of the dykes, where willows and tallows seem to grow downwards towards a subaqueous

sky. On clear, moonless nights the still waters reflect the stars. So suspensive is the silence that every sound seems startlingly audible. A hare, suddenly frightened from its form on the rond, scampers over the river wall and vanishes amid the long grass. A vole rustles among the sedges a moment, and then enters the water with a 'flop' like a dropped stone; a louder rustle among the rushes near a sallow carr may be made by an otter seeking a feast of bream. The silence thus broken at intervals suggests that the wild life of the waterside is wakeful and listening intently. Often I have fancied that the eyes of unseen birds and beasts are fixed on me when I intrude upon their haunts at night, so seldom do the creatures I know are there show their fear by taking flight. For they must be able to see man when he cannot see them, and to judge whether his intrusion among them threatens danger.

A faint gleam of lamplight on the reeds, scarcely perceptible, so bright is the moonlight, betokens an eel-catcher in his house-boat, keeping watch over his sett. He is seated in a little well at the stern of the boat, where he is glad to make room for a companion who will help him to while away his night vigil. The lamp in the cabin reveals an attempt to adorn its cramped interior. A photograph of the house-boat—the work, probably, of some cruising amateur—hangs above the empty stove, and is flanked by a couple of coloured almanacs and a print of some distinguished British generals. But there is little room for such decorations. A double-barrelled breech-loader hangs in a pair of leather slings nailed to the roof; eel-lines and liggers are suspended on little hooks on the walls, together with a fisherman's 'oily' and a pair of marsh boots. At the fireside end of one of the lockers, which serve the eel-catcher for seat, table, and bed, stands a little oil stove on which a kettle is boiling; an open cupboard at the bow end of the cabin contains crockery, bottles, bread, and a jar containing pickled bream. A wickerbound water-bottle, a punt sail undergoing repair, a frying-pan, a torn copy of an illustrated weekly paper, and a pair of coloured blankets complete the inventory of the cabin's visible contents, but the lockers no doubt contain other things useful to a water-gipsy. The boat is a smack boat, so

old and leaky that it will no longer keep afloat, and is drawn up on to the land near the mouth of a sluice dyke.

The eel-catcher is threading some hooks for an eel-line, but he raises his eyes from his work every few minutes to see if the approach of a wherry makes it necessary for him to lower his sett. Now and again, too, he glances towards the sallow carr where the otter is lurking, and vows to 'hev that owd warmint afore long'. He talks of 'orters', and how he has known one to draw an eel-line out of the water and eat the eels off the hooks. But that otter, as he says, must have been a 'werry hungry warmint', for otters are fonder of bream than of eels. He doubts whether they (the otters) are much scarcer than they were fifty years ago. Every year he hears of about the same number being shot or trapped. Badgers he has never seen, and does not believe there is one in Norfolk. Like most of the eel-catchers, he knows a good deal about the habits of fish and wild-fowl, such knowledge being more or less essential to him; but he scarcely knows the names of a dozen of the small birds of the meadows, woods, and waterside; 'they ain't no good to him'! He has heard the boom of the bittern, and can remember the time when bitterns were not so very rare in Broadland; but he 'can't mind as he ever seed one'. Eels, he says, are nothing like so plentiful as they used to be; anyhow, nothing like such large quantities are taken in the setts as there were thirty years ago. He has worked a sett every year for nearly fifty years, so he reckons he ought to know.

Towards daybreak the air becomes perceptibly cooler, but not so much so as to cause any discomfort. Almost as soon as the eastern sky begins to brighten, some of the birds which have been silent since nightfall begin to sing; and by the time the rosy flush of dawn has come, all Nature seems awake. The marsh-folk are early abroad; a cattle-tender is seen on one of the marsh walls, and the clinking of milk cans is heard in the neighbourhood of a marsh farm. A fresh breeze sets the reeds swaying and rustling, and some of the yachts leave their moorings and spread their white sails. Then the sharpening of scythes and the rattling of mowing machines begins again; and before the sun is very far above the horizon the air is sweet with the scent of hay. Another day for cruising along





Frank Southgate.

HAULING UP THE EEL-PODS





quiet waterways, for seeing pleasant rural scenes and listening to pleasant rural sounds, for restful enjoyment and reinvigorating mind and body, has begun. But the beauty, the enchantment, the 'primevalness', as some one has called it, of the night cannot be forgotten.

Among the men who sail the yachts hired for summer cruising, there are some who seem to think that the chief object a visitor should have in view is to get from place to place as quickly as possible. That this is not the case should be impressed upon such men at the commencement of a cruise; for half the charm of Broadland is lost to those who let such boatmen have their own way. Time is often better spent in staying a day or two on such waters as Heigham Sounds and Barton Broad, or even in some unfrequented dyke or inlet, than in sailing along many miles of river. Nor should the voyager confine his attention to the waterways. Broadland consists of much besides Broads and rivers. There is scarcely a marsh dam or footpath, ferry road or lane that does not lead to some little hamlet with an interesting church or some picturesque straw- or reed-thatched cottages. Sometimes it is as well to look upon a yacht as a sort of movable hotel, which at any time can be made a convenient centre from which a district can be explored. In this way the delights of a holiday spent at some country farm or seacoast hamlet can be added to those peculiar to voyaging in Broadland. There are times when the necessarily cramped conditions of life on a yacht grow somewhat galling, when one tires of sitting still, even though new vistas are continually opening in panoramic succession. Then it is very pleasant to step ashore for a while, ramble along the footpaths through the upland cornfields, see the crimson blush of poppies instead of creamy clusters of meadow-sweet, and inhale the fragrance of woodbine instead of that of water-mints.

But summer in Broadland is so full of delights that it is needless to suggest them. There are pleasures to suit almost every inclination, and opportunities for the indulgence of almost every outdoor hobby. Those who care little for quiet nooks and the study of Nature find entertainment in the regattas or in occasional excursions to the thronged sands

and piers of Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Artist, botanist, bird-lover, angler, entomologist, each goes his own way and enjoys himself in his own fashion. For each there is an ample field, and to each the long days seem only half long enough. Even the antiquary need not be idle, for in St. Benet's Abbey, Langley Abbey, Caister and Bungay Castles, and many of the Broadland churches, he finds plenty to keep him interested and profitably occupied. Even men who have no hobby nor special inclination continually come upon something in Broadland that interests them, for the district is unlike any other in England. In spite of the great change which has taken place in it in what is, geologically speaking, a brief period, it is still remarkable for its primitiveness; like large heaths, or high mountain-tops, some of the Broadlands seem unchanged since the world was made. On and around them men live primitive lives. By studying these men some of us learn what are the essential things of life.

## CHAPTER IV

### AUTUMN AND WINTER IN BROADLAND

#### AUTUMN

SUMMER often lingers on into early autumn. During the last week of September and the early part of October there are cruising yachts still afloat ; at Wroxham, Oulton, and Potter Heigham hardly a wherry, yacht, or launch is as yet dismantled. On those bright, warm October days, when the banded dragon-flies twitter against the withering sedges, little flocks of goldfinches flit about among the down-topped marsh thistles, and the gyrating water-beetles are as active as in July, quite a fleet of small sailing craft is seen on the rivers. The early mornings, however, are damp and misty ; the spiders' cobweb-hammocks, swung up by the dyke-sides and among the tall yellow grasses, are weighed down with grey beads of moisture ; and even at midday a ramble on some of the marshes or a visit to an alder carr means being drenched with dew. The blue haze which all day hangs over land and water is denser than it was in summer ; Nature drops a thicker veil over her fading face. When the reeds rustle in the wind, it is with a crispness of sound betokening that the reed-cutters' harvest is ripening and will soon be ready for his meag and scythe. But often for days together there is scarcely breeze enough to cause a whisper among the reeds and sedges ; sailing craft hardly make any headway ; the heat and moisture make the air more oppressive than it was during many days in July. The marshes perhaps are steeped in sunshine, but its light and warmth are not welcomed with birds' songs. Now and again a lark soars and sings for a while, but soon drops to earth again, as though it had felt in its aerial flight the chill breath of coming winter. Except for the larks and, perhaps, in the neighbourhood of a copse, hanger, or oak-bordered driftway,

a cheery robin, the feathered songsters are silent ; but the plovers are beginning to flock together, and often break the silence of the lonesome marshlands with their mournful cries.

Nearly all the bright-hued wild flowers which decked the riversides and dykes are gone. The tall willow-herbs have burst their long seed-pods and smothered themselves with clinging down ; the hemp agrimony is faded ; the dykes are full of withered water-parsnip, loosestrife, and plantain stalks ; and where the flowering rush flaunted its beautiful umbels, the dingy bur-marigold is almost the only flower in bloom. But on some of the damp margins the blue eyes of forget-me-not still peer from amid the horsetails and marshworts ; and although the bladderworts and the curious aloe-like water-soldiers are sunk on to the ooze, the arrowheads still pierce the floating mantle of frogbits and duckweeds. The meadow-sweet, in spite of its fragile appearance, here and there displays a cluster of blossoms, the fragrance of which seems stronger now than in summer ; the mints, too, have not lost all their mauve florets, and a few yellow-rayed composite plants give a touch of bright colour to the sun-scorched river walls. The pasture marshes, on which the cattle are still browsing, are becoming tawny as heathlands with the sapless stems of grasses which have sprung up after the hay was mown ; but the damp rush marshes are still green. There the beautiful Grass of Parnassus, whose creamy cup-shaped blossoms seem made to hold the mist-drops, is in full bloom, amid blue devil's-bits, white umbels of angelica, and a few golden marsh marigolds, which are flowering for a second time in the year.

One sadly misses the summer birds. The warblers are gone from the reed-beds, carrs, and marshes, the wagtails from the dykesides, the whitethroats from the driftway hedgerows, and the wheatears from the heaps of ooze and weeds which the marshmen have heaped up on the dyke banks ; and by the middle of October the swallows, swifts, and martins have followed them. Gone, too, are the redshanks, after spending a little time on the Breydon flats ; and the black-headed gulls have abandoned their breeding haunts at Hoveton and Somerton. Other birds have come to take their places ; but none of them can be to us what the warblers and whitethroats were



AN AUTUMN DAY





in spring, and the redshanks and puits in June. Flocks of fieldfares begin to arrive almost as soon as the last harvest wagon has jolted from the upland fields to the stackyard ; their harsh cries are heard on the misty marshes. With them come redwings, to feed on the ruddy hawthorn berries and in the stackyards of the marsh farms. Thousands of larks, too, have come to flock and feed with the home-bred birds in the stubble and on the marshlands. Since the middle of August great numbers of goldcrests have made their marvellous overseas flight, and now the fir copses are full of them, clinging to the needles and creeping like mice about the branches. Then the bramblings are seen on the marshes near the coast. Migrant fowl are already working southward. Widgeon, or ' smee ', as they are known in Broadland, are to be met with on some of the Broads and riverside ronds ; so too are tufted duck. A little later the ' pokers ' or pochards arrive—in October, when the gunner is on the alert for golden plovers, flocks of which spread themselves over the marshes, where they feed with the green plovers ; and at night the homeward-bound marshman and belated wherryman hear them whistling overhead, as they flight to the uplands, seeking a change of diet in the newly-sown grain. When the October gales begin to blow, sea-gulls visit the marshes and herring gulls are seen on some of the Broads.

So, although the summer migrants have taken flight to warmer climes, thousands and tens of thousands of other birds have come to Broadland. Marshmen working near the coast, and beachmen prowling along the seashore after the tide has ebbed, have seen some of them arrive, large and small companies of weary-winged wayfarers, some of whom had scarcely strength enough left to reach the land when they had sighted it, and most of them were glad to alight on the bushes of sea buckthorn on the sandhills and even on the sand and shingle of the beach. But the men who see them come in are fortunate to do so ; most of us miss the wonderful sight of the small birds' arrival, and only see the rooks and crows, which for days together come streaming in all along the coast, over town, fishing hamlet, and sand dune. Most of the rooks, after their long journey, make for the fields and marshlands ; but the

grey crows, the ' Kentishmen ', often settle on the beach and on the Breydon flats, where they feed on the flotsam left stranded by the ebbing tide. All along the sands, where a dark stain of coal dust, crimson plocamium, and green bladder-wrack marks the limit of the flood tide, you may see the footprints of that careful scavenger, the grey or hooded crow.

On these October days, when the air is heavily laden with moisture, and the sodden grass, swampy ronds, and stagnant dykes steam in the sun and exhale an odour of tide-wrack and rotting sedge, the smoke of the weed-burners' fires drift down from the uplands, mingling with the blue, quivering haze, and streaming through the sallow wands and red-fruited hawthorns. The pungent smell of the smoke from the smouldering weed-heaps is characteristic of a Broadland autumn day. So, too, is the sight of a solitary marshman dyke-drawing; for many of the dykes are choked up with rank-growing water-weeds, which must be cleared out before the rains set in and the rain-water comes pouring down from the upland field-drains and ' holls '. From early morning, when a dense fog hangs over the marshes, until dusk, when the fog rises again, the dyke-drawer is at work in the midst of the marshes, generally with no other companions than the rats and voles in the dyke banks and the snipe which come to feed in the hovers. Clad in a corduroy or moleskin sleeve-waistcoat or a fisherman's ' gansy ', corduroy trousers, in each leg of which a telescopic tuck is taken by means of a leathern strap, heavy marsh boots, and a hat like that of a Tyrolean mountaineer, there is a primitive regard only for essentials about him which is peculiarly impressive. His appearance suggests a product of Nature in her sombre moods, a man shaped by solitude and rendered apathetic by isolation. He is slow of speech, lethargic of movement, and nothing excites him. It is difficult to believe that it was by the labour of such as he the wide marshlands were reclaimed and made to provide thousands of acres of rich grazing ground for cattle.

Although there is nothing in his appearance to suggest it, he is in all probability a man with considerable responsibilities. One such man I met had something like four miles of dykes to clear, a drainage windmill to attend to, and frequently as

many as two hundred 'head' of cattle under his charge. The cattle—most of them fattening bullocks—necessitated his spending almost all his time on the marshes. In one week he had, with the assistance of other marshmen, to haul five bullocks out of dykes into which they had waded until they were embedded in the mud. This same marshman had a curious tale to tell about a narrow escape he had one morning, while concealed in the reeds around a marsh pool, waiting for the fighting of the fowl. He had gone down to the pool before daybreak, and had floated a pair of decoy ducks on the water. They were wooden decoys of his own making, and to increase their resemblance to real fowl he had affixed to them pairs of real mallards' wings. Just as day dawned he became aware of the presence of fowl near him, so he began to imitate the calling of a drake, an accomplishment upon which he rather prided himself. Suddenly, while he crouched among the reeds, he heard the sharp *crack, crack* of a double-barrelled breech-loader, and immediately his decoy ducks turned over in the water. In the grey misty dawnlight, another gunner, whose attention had been attracted by the marshman's quacking, had mistaken the decoys for real birds. The marshman's shouting so alarmed the gunner, who was lying on the side of a neighbouring marsh wall, that he nearly fainted, believing he had shot some one. 'An' he pretty nigh had,' said the marshman; 'for I worn't more'n a couple o' yards out o' line wi' th' decoy ducks from where he lay. But a miss wor as good as a mile.' Such reminiscences are frequently to be heard by the dykesides on damp October days.

The sunsets of the humid, sunny days of St. Luke's Little Summer are painted with the most gorgeous hues from Nature's palette. The low-lying clouds are edged with smouldering gold, radiant streaks of golden light flash gloriously across the heavens, and for a time after the sun has gone down feathery coral-pink cloudlets float amid the amber afterglow. Broads and rivers reflect all the vivid hues of this cloudland glory; but not for long, for the fog soon spreads over land and water, blotting out river and dyke, marsh and mere.

To be caught by such a fog in the midst of a maze of marsh dykes is an unpleasant experience. On an autumn night I had



such a one on the marshes between the Acle new road and Breydon. In the afternoon I had sailed from Yarmouth to a little creek on the north-west side of the estuary, having arranged to spend the night with a friend whose house-boat was moored near a marsh farmstead called Banham's Farm. I was to have had another companion ; but he had failed to put in an appearance before I left Yarmouth, and just before dusk I strolled across to the Acle road, in order to meet him should he have come to Yarmouth by a late train and started to walk to the spot where the house-boat was moored. By the time I reached the Yarmouth tollgate night had set in ; so, having seen nothing of my friend, I hastened back towards the shores of Breydon. I had not gone far before the fog came rolling across the marshes like a great cloud of white smoke, and when I turned off the Acle road I could see no object that was more than a dozen yards away from me. Still for a while I had no difficulty in finding my way, for it lay beside a marsh dyke ; but when I had crossed the railway I was soon at a loss to discover my whereabouts. For the footpath was so hidden by the grass which had sprung up since the hay was mown that I soon lost sight of it, and presently I found my way barred by a wide dyke. Having nothing else to guide me, I kept to the dykeside, hoping to find a plank bridge or gate which would bring me on to the path again. But although I found a gate I could see no path, and for an hour or more I wandered amid a labyrinth of dykes, from time to time coming upon a gate which seemed familiar, because I had already passed through it once or twice in the course of my wanderings.

The fog hung about me like a wet shroud, distilling soaking, chilling moisture. It covered my clothes with an aqueous dust, and whenever I closed my eyes mist-drops trickled down my face. On every side I was shut in by an impenetrable pall of fog ; yet when I looked up I could see the stars clearly. If I had been on a wide and trackless moor the stars might have helped me ; but here it was impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards in any direction, for the dykes soon brought me to a standstill. Tired of trudging through the long wet grass, I stopped against a gate and listened for some sound which might guide me ; but all I could hear was the clamour

of the black-headed gulls on the Breydon flats, and now and again the *laka, laka* of a 'saddleback' or the cry of a flighting curlew. Once I thought I heard human footsteps approaching; but it was only a bullock's hooves brushing through the long grass. Even the phantasmal company of that marshland bogle, the ghostly herdsman, who, when the 'sea-smoke' drifted down upon the lowlands, used to drive the cattle into the morasses, would have been welcome to me; but the only mist-wraith I saw resolved itself into a gnarled sallow bush by a dykeside. It seemed as though I were fated to spend the night on the marshes, and when I thought of the snug little house-boat, where supper was awaiting me, the prospect was anything but pleasing; but help was at hand, though I knew nothing of its coming. For suddenly, while I was thinking of trying to find my way back to the railway, I heard some one shouting, apparently not far from where I was standing. At first I imagined it must be some one who, like myself, was lost on the marshes; but when I gave an answering hail there presently emerged from the fog the burly form of Banham, the marsh farmer. 'A rokey night, this here,' was his greeting when he saw me; and when he learnt that I had lost my way he assured me that I 'warn't th' fust by a sight' that had done so on the Breydon marshes. He thought it not unlikely that his wife might have some difficulty in finding her way home, for she had gone to Yarmouth, and should have returned by nightfall. It was for her he was looking when he found me. He soon brought me on to the Breydon wall, which I followed until I saw a light flickering like a will-o'-the-wisp. It was, however, no such 'fickle and deceptive flame', but a lantern which my friend had lighted and placed on the roof of his house-boat. In a few moments it had guided me into the warmth and comfort of the house-boat's cosy cabin.

But early autumn is not all lingering summer days and chill, foggy nights. During October, when the Lowestoft yacht basin is filled with trawlers instead of yachts, and the docks, both at Lowestoft and Yarmouth, are densely packed with east coast drifters and similar craft from Inverness, Banff, and Kirkcaldy, all busily engaged in the autumn fishing, there are often days of lowering clouds and wild weather. Then the

cruising yachts which have lingered late on the rivers disappear as if by magic, and at Oulton, Wroxham, and Potter Heigham the fleets of white-winged craft are rapidly dismantled, drawn up on to the 'hard' or hauled into the boat-sheds, there to remain until next season. For the next eight months the wherry-men, reed-cutters, and eel-catchers will have the rivers and Broad's to themselves, and only enthusiastic rovers—'wild, gipsy spirits', some one has called them—will admit that during these months the lives of the natives is not all labour and sorrow. But even when the storm-clouds gather over river, marsh, and lone lagoon, there are intervals when the sunlight breaks through the wind-driven, dun-coloured scud, and makes luminous the 'shadow-streaks of rain'. These wild October gleams and glooms, these smiles and frowns of an autumnal April, together with the boisterous buffets of the October gales, must be seen and felt by every one who wishes really to 'know' Broadland; for the district is curiously susceptible, and owes much of its charm to the variability of its atmospheric environment.

These chill and gusty days, often grey with a drizzling rain, when the willow wands wave wildly, and the heavy-gaited marshmen stumble over dense clumps of toadstools and huge puff-balls which have sprung up during the warm, damp weather, are days when a striking change is wrought in the aspect of Broadland. Until they come, summer seems loth to leave us. Our native trees—the sturdy oaks, tough alders, and hardy willows—have hardly lost a leaf; only such tender aliens as the horse-chestnuts have felt the chill of the autumn winds, and strewn the copse borders and driftways with a ruddy drift of withered leaves. But the October gales send the yellow birch leaves flying far and wide, blanch or stain the petals of the late-blooming wild flowers, and bring winter close upon the heels of summer. After the gales the withered leaves fall quickly; in the quiet of the copses you may hear them distinctly, tapping against the boughs and twigs as they fall. Even more noticeable is the fall of the beech mast, which, when once it has begun to drop, comes pattering down in showers. So too do the acorns and sweet-chestnut burrs; the copse foot-paths are covered with a crunching carpet of them. The



AN OCTOBER MORNING ON THE MARSHES





crimson of the hawthorn berries deepens, and the scarlet of the wild rose and bryony berries brightens; the bracken on the Herringfleet Hills turns golden-brown. But the most vivid autumn colouring is seen in the dykes and by the dykesides, where the leaves of the slender water-pepper polygonum (*P. Hydropiper*) are afire with vermilion and gold. Amid all these signs of waning life and decay it is pleasant to see the tightly packed catkins already formed on the hazels and alders, and to notice, when the elm leaves begin to fall, the fretted edges of the twigs, where the young buds are appearing. One realizes then that the old life is only making way for the new.

October sees every eel-sett spread across the rivers; for the eels, which for some weeks have been making their way downstream in small numbers, now begin to come down in shoals, and the eel-catcher looks for good hauls when he raises his pods. On Breydon, the punt-gunners, who until a few years ago were to be found there, were afloat before daybreak, and the loud booming of their great swivel guns put to flight the gulls, curlews, and flocks of small wading birds—stints, knots, dunlins, and ringed plovers—which fed on the oozy flats. The flight-shooter, too, looks for some sport on the Broads and such river reaches and fleets as are crossed by the wild fowl's lines of flight. But colder weather will have to set in before the fowl come in such numbers to Broadland as to provide work for the Fritton decoymen. 'Ah, them 'coys!' the old marsh and river gunners exclaim; 'there on't never be any quantity o' fowl for us while them 'coys is used.' But there are few decoys now compared with the number there used to be, and in the days when they were worked at Horsey, Woodbastwick, Ranworth, and Barnby, as well as at Fritton, little was heard about scarcity of fowl. Better drainage of the marshes is no doubt accountable for the disappearance of several species which once bred in the district; but I agree with an old Broadsgun friend of mine, who reckons that it 'ain't accountable for so much as some folks 'ud hev us belaaave. What gunners want in Broadland is more room to shute in, an' th' right sort o' weather.' Given the right weather, there is plenty of fowl.

## WINTER

An enthusiast for Broadland cruising once determined to spend a whole year on the Broads. He began his cruise in the middle of September, and for nearly three months all went well with him; but on December 11th his yacht was 'frozen up' on Oulton Broad, and there perforce it stayed until February 2nd. For about ten days he remained on board, watching the skaters disporting themselves on the ice, and listening to a Norwegian skipper, who was on an ice-bound lugger near by, singing 'Gamle Norge' to while away the time. On December 20th, however, he fled to London, where, as the reports which reached him from Broadland were unfavourable, he stayed until the middle of January.

I well remember that winter. For six weeks navigation was impossible on the Broadland waterways. At Oulton, Wroxham, Beccles and many an isolated marshland staithe, wherries lay ice-bound. During the greater part of that time the marshes were hidden under a white coverlet of snow. Skaters skated from Oulton Broad to Beccles and back for pastime; wherrymen, old and young, lacking work to do, donned their 'pattens' and played hockey on the ice. Some of the marshland and ferry inns—which, when the cruising season is over, rely almost entirely on the wherrymen for custom—almost might have closed their doors to the public without turning away trade. Most of the small birds—the tits, finches, and pipits—seemed to desert the district, only a few of them being seen around the marsh farmsteads and in the shelter of the carrs and thick hedgerows; the rest, no doubt, sought the neighbourhood of the towns, where food was to be found. Even the hooded crows—the grey-backed Kentishmen whose raucous *craas* are heard so often in winter by the dykesides—flocked to the Breydon flats, or, in large numbers, sought the company of the ringed plovers and sanderlings on the sea-shore. The winter migrants—the snow and Lapland buntings, the shorelarks, fieldfares, and redwings—came to us in great numbers, to find a chilly welcome and the hardest fare. From the middle of December until the end of January the atmospheric conditions and the outlook

over the wide marshlands were arctic ; when the sun shone the dazzling whiteness of the snow-clad levels was almost blinding. In the snow the footprints of starving birds, stoats, and weasels made varied patterns, and one could trace them for long distances across the flats and along the walls. Otters left behind them a spoor by which a gunner easily might have followed them to their nests or lairs. How they lived during those bitter weeks it is hard to say. Thin ice is no obstacle to their fishing, but ice two feet thick will baffle a polar bear. No doubt the coots and water-hens provided what the frozen rivers denied.

Such long spells of frosty weather are comparatively rare. As a rule, the rivers are ' open ' to wherries during the greater part of the winter ; often there is no hindrance to voyaging all through the year. But when a spell of cold weather accompanied by heavy snowfall sets in, some of the marsh highways and by-ways soon become untraversable, and the aspect of the far-spreading lowlands is suggestive of a Lapland landscape or the Siberian steppes. In a few hours I have seen the wind-driven snow heaped in drifts ten to twelve feet high on the willow-bordered dams and against the river walls, isolating the lonely homes of the marsh cattle-tenders, filling the frozen dykes, and forming great banks against the windmills, to which the millmen, if they would enter them, must dig their way. To be caught in the midst of the marshes by a heavy snowstorm is, as many a marshman and gunner can testify, as discomforting an experience as being overtaken there by a dense fog. Even at midday it soon becomes impossible to discern the familiar objects which serve as landmarks ; trees, mills, cattle-sheds, and marsh homesteads are obscured by the fast-falling flakes and the white snow-scud whirled from the rising drifts. The footpaths across the marshes, often hardly discernible even in fine weather, are soon obliterated ; sometimes only by observing the direction of the wind have men been able to reach the borders of the marshes. Such storms have been attended by tragedies, but to no greater degree in Broadland than in other districts in England where travellers may be worsted in a battle with the elements.

Crouched in a corner seat of a railway carriage, journeying,

say, from Lowestoft to Norwich, and scanning through the breath-dimmed window the lonesome marshlands stretching away to a misty horizon, the traveller who has had no closer acquaintance with the district may well wonder, at this season of the year, what constitutes the charm of Broadland. He sees the marshes tawny with withered grasses, rushes, and sedges, a few rooks or lapwings feeding on them or wheeling above them, leafless alders, willows, and sailows dotted here and there by the dykesides, and occasionally he gets a glimpse of a steely river, its surface, maybe, blurred and ruffled by an east wind. Once or twice, perhaps, during his journey he may observe a solitary marshman at work, or a wherry sailing between banks fringed with yellow, grey-plumed reeds. Little else is likely to attract his eye. If the day be drawing to a close, and a fog gathering over the marshes, he will see only a grey misty waste, and probably he will be glad to turn his attention to the farmer who is talking about a forthcoming coursing match, or the garrulous 'commercial' who is explaining to a sleepy stranger what he would do if he were in charge of the War Office. Broadland, he will perhaps admit, may be a delightful district in summer; but in winter—well, every one has a right to his own opinion, and his is that a man must be born in the district to appreciate it during the winter months.

It were well if he could see some nook or corner of Broadland perhaps the following morning. A foggy evening has been succeeded by a frosty night—a 'regular rimer', as the marshman calls it. The marshes are as white as if there had been a fall of snow. Every feathery reed plume, sharp sedge blade, and bending rush is coated with glistening ice-crystals; the withering leaves of the great water-docks are like diamond-dusted shields; on the dry stalks of the water-plantains, the brown marsh thistles, and the sapless stems of the willow-herbs, the frozen mist-drops hang in silvery settings and fairy-like festoons. In the carrs and copses the frost fays have been at work, gemming every pine needle, alder catkin, and slender birch twig with crystalline spray. If a bird takes flight from a bough, some of the spray falls in a powdery, scintillating shower. The hedgerow borders of the driftways,





FROSTY SUNRISE ON ORMESBY BROAD





last night bare and mist-drenched, are bedecked with frost garlands, rimy tangles of bramble, sparkling arches of briar, glittering embroideries wrought by the deft fingers of the frost sprites. Down by the river a musical tinkling is heard—the tinkling of the ice-crystals on the reed stems; every breath of breeze makes music, and the bearded titmice, as they take short flights above the reeds, utter at intervals their silvery, symphonic call-notes.

A walk along one of the marsh dams, at Acle, Haddiscoe, or elsewhere, on such a day is delightful. The keenness of the air urges one to a brisk pace which sets the blood coursing through the veins; but one's progress is not so rapid that one fails to see the gleaming of the sea-gulls' white wings against the blue sky, the titmice creeping along the branches of the alders, and the fieldfares—the most beautiful thrushes in the world, some one has called them—which have settled on a tree, but which are gone before one has time fully to appreciate their beauty. Starlings—large flocks of them—linnets, larks, and pipits are seen on the marshes, flying about restlessly, for their hard fare is hard to get when the ground is frozen and everything on it is stiff with rime. A snipe—the marshes seem full of them—is flushed from a dykeside, and flies off uttering a harsh, startling cry. In the distance, where a marshman carrying a heavy, long-barrelled muzzle-loader is the only human being in sight, a flock of golden plovers is fighting towards the uplands. In the dusk of evening strange bird-voices are heard crying in the gloom; the weird whistle of the curlew sounds across the flats, and from high overhead comes the clanging of fighting geese.

Walking is pleasanter than sailing in Broadland on such a day; but if at midday the sun shines brightly, it is worth one's while to go afloat on one of the wilder Broads and see what effect the autumn gales and frosty nights have had on the rank aquatic vegetation which surrounds it. The upland fields are colourless, the woodlands sombre, and the sandhills drear; but where the reeds and sedges are mirrored in unruffled water, the autumn hues of withering leaf and yellowing culm, are, in winter, intensified. A tract of swamp bathed in sunlight glows as though aflame, a reed-bed is like a field of

ripe corn, and a decaying dock leaf seems stained with ruby wine. Then the reflections of the storm-torn reed plumes, leafless stems, and bleaching tufts of water-grasses are so clearly defined that it is easy to imagine one might grasp them, so different are they to the shimmering, evanescent semblances to be seen on a breezy summer day.

Effective drainage has rendered the marshes far less likely to be inundated by rain-floods than was the case at a time well within the memory of many living Broadlanders ; but even now Broadland provides the best skating to be had anywhere in England, except on the Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire fens. When Hickling Broad is frozen, skaters have an expanse of ice compared with which the Serpentine is a mere pond ; and when frosty weather sets in, marshes at St. Olave's and elsewhere are flooded with river-water, their owners being glad to earn a few pounds by providing ice on which skating can be indulged in without risk of dangerous immersion. Marsh ice, as a rule, is as clear and smooth as glass ; I have skated over acres of it, through which every grass-blade below could be seen. Broad ice, on the contrary, is often of unequal thickness and quality ; for until it becomes too thick, it is broken up in order to keep channels open for wherries and other boats. The rise and fall of the tides, too, breaks the thin ice around the edges of the Broad, and it is only when a sharp frost has continued several days that it is safe to venture on it. Even then, often there are spots where the ice remains thin or the water unfrozen ; these, the Broadsmen say, mark the position of ever-flowing springs oozing up from the beds of the Broad. Still, I have known winters when for weeks together it was possible to skate every day almost all over Oulton Broad, and I can well remember one winter when a sheep was roasted on the ice there. That year we had skating by torchlight in various parts of Broadland, and strange and weird was the effect of the torches flickering and flaring over the Broad, while the night-flying birds, lured by the lights, piped and cried in the darkness overhead. Occasionally, there were false alarms ; the ice, falling with the tide, would crack with a report like a gun, and the skaters

would scurry towards the shore. But there was little to fear; the ice, for the most part, was over a foot thick, and the cracks were dangerous only when a skater caught a skate-blade in them, and came down with a whack which made him rub his knees and elbows ruefully. I have heard ancient natives of the neighbourhood of Berney Arms talk of the time when good skating was to be had on that part of Breydon now known as Burgh Flats. One old man could remember how, as a boy, he skated from Berney Arms to Yarmouth to get for his mother a halfpenny-worth of yeast—a ten miles' journey, which he had to make twice, because just before he reached home he tripped over a boat's painter laying on the ice, and fell and broke the yeast bottle. In winter, some of the marsh farmsteads were, at that time, so inaccessible that there was no way of getting coal to them unless a coal-laden wherry happened to be ice-bound somewhere near.

In Broadland it is only the townsman who attempts figure-skating—an artificial performance which, Dr. Emerson remarks, reminds one of the antics of the 'foolish harlequin of the pantomime'. As in the case of his brother of the fens, the native skater's chief ambition is to outdistance every one else, even if in order to do so he must sacrifice grace to speed. Some of the wherry-men and marshmen are experts on 'pattens', in so far as proficiency consists of an ability to attain a great pace; the muscular development of their legs, attained by quanting the heavily laden wherries and trudging over rough marshlands, enables them to outstay most of their rivals. Skating matches, however, for some reason, are organized less frequently nowadays than they were forty years ago; the interest in them seems to have died out, or, at any rate, is very local.

Long spells of frosty weather, welcome as they may be to the skater and gunner, are hard times for many of the marshmen, who, now pike-snaring is made illegal and liggering is permitted only on one or two Broads, where the inhabitants of neighbouring villages possess 'ancient rights', sometimes are 'hard put to' to find occupation and means of livelihood. Free shooting, except on Breydon and along the foreshores, is to be had only in very restricted areas; eel-setts cannot be

worked, and even if they could, it would be to little purpose when the eels have ceased 'running'; picking is impossible on the ice-laid rivers and in the frozen dykes; dyke-drawing, wall-mending, and other similar marsh occupations are equally impracticable while the dykes are filled with ice and the ground is hard as iron. Open weather is anxiously awaited, so that reed-cutting may begin. Meanwhile, it is not surprising if some visitor, who during his summer voyaging happened to hint at the possibility of such a thing, receives by post a pair of bearded titmice from Broadland. For this the marshman can hardly be blamed; it is the connivance of the visitor that is reprehensible. For in winter the bearded titmice are a constant temptation to the prowling gunner. At this season, abandoning their restricted breeding haunts, flocks of these pretty little birds wander far and wide over the district, visiting most of the Broad and following the courses of the rivers. Among the yellow reeds you may see them creeping and swinging, and hear their call-notes; sometimes a dozen or more of them are visible together, and their chinging is as delightful bird-music as one can listen to. But while you are listening, maybe, the report of a gun startles you, and if you search the reed bed you find, lying on a blood-sprayed reed blade, a tiny bunch of ruffled feathers. I myself have seen such a sight; and not all the stuffed birds set up in what the marshmen call 'glassen boxes' seemed worth the death of the little minstrel who a few minutes before was clashing his cymbals among the reeds.

But the death of a bearded titmouse means, perhaps, dinners for the gunner's family for a week, or a few hours' conviviality for himself at one of the marshland inns. Even if it only mean the latter, I, for one, knowing something of what the marshman's life is like in winter, find it hard to blame him: the cheery glow of the fire in the inn kitchen, the beer warmed in the pewter before being poured into the mug, and the congenial company assembled on the high-backed settles flanking the wide hearth, are to the marshmen what to the city man is his club. Hobnobbing with other marshmen and with wherry-men from the river, listening to oft-told tales and joining in the choruses of familiar songs, he forgets for a



while the icy blasts of the frozen flats, the chill grey dawns, and the days spent in solitary toiling. The rector, when he goes by the inn, may shake his head when he hears the loud-voiced merriment within ; but no one knows better than he how little enjoyment the marshman can get elsewhere at this season of the year. Old George the eel-catcher, when remonstrated with in the morning, admits that he was ' a bit cherry-merry ' last night ; but he went to the Dog and Duck to see young Zack about a pick-head, and Billy Johnson was just home, ' flush ' with money, from the autumn fishing. It was a cold night, he had been ice-breaking all day, the inn fire was very comforting, and one thing led to another, so maybe—well, he may have had a *drop* too much ; but seeing that Billy Johnson paid, and would not take ' no ' for an answer, what could he do ?

But the hardest winters have an end, and when open weather comes, and the rafts can be towed or quanted up and down the rivers, reed-cutting provides employment for many of the men of the marshes. And it goes on well into the spring ; in fact, until the appearance of the ' colts ' or young reeds puts a stop to the cutting. By that time the coltsfoot has pushed its way up through the clods on the river walls, the marsh marigold has bloomed by the dykesides, and the warblers have come back to the amber reed-beds and budding carrs.

## CHAPTER V

### THE OLD-TIME BROADSMEN

A FEW years ago a voyager on the Broadland rivers could not help noticing, more especially on the Bure and its tributaries, the Ant and Thurne, the little ark-like house-boats of the eel-catchers. Most of them were very ancient, dilapidated craft ; some, indeed, were so leaky that they could not be kept afloat in the creeks and inlets, and were dragged up on to the banks or ronds ; but nearly all of them were tenanted during the months when the eels are ' running ', and their occupants usually contrived to make themselves comfortable in their cramped little cabins. In another chapter I shall have occasion to refer again to these eel-catchers : I only mention them here in order to remark that the one or two of them remaining are almost the sole survivors of the passing race of real Broadsmen.

In the ' good old days ', as the surviving Broadsmen call them, when no restrictions were placed upon the taking of fish and slaughtering of fowl, the Broadsmen's life was a happy one. The men who lived in isolated cottages on the lonesome marshlands, and spent days and nights on the rivers and fens were of a freedom-loving and self-reliant type. Leaving to others the waging of war, the tilling of land, the reaping of corn, they endured shivering fits of ague, scorching blaze of summer sun, and numbing blast of winter wind, because the fascination of an unfettered life had cast its spell upon them. Busy with their nets, traps, and decoys, they were content to have no part in the doings of the world which lay beyond the horizon of their familiar marshes. For their life was far from being monotonous : every season, and almost every month of the year, brought them change of occupation. They were descendants of the men to whom the barons of old who held the Broadland manors looked for fish and fowl for their tables,

and whom the abbots of St. Benet-at-Holm and Langley, when they entertained courtly guests with falconry, summoned to guide those guests to the haunts of the hernshaws. They knew every rush marsh on which the plovers nested, every inlet and dyke into which the bream and roach swarmed at spawning-time, every wild fowl by its cry or flight. Often for days and nights together they heard no voices but the wild-life voices of marsh and mere ; so that the ' chucking ' of the sedge-warbler, the clanking of the coot, and the rustling of the voles and otters in the hovers became to them companionable sounds. Their methods of gaining a livelihood made them close observers of the habits of fish, bird, and beast ; the knowledge of natural history that was lost when an aged Broadsmen died, would, if it had been printed, have made his name famous. They were flight-shooters, punt-gunners, eel-catchers, fish-netters, reed-cutters, dyke-drawers, and cattle-tenders. Frequently one man, in the course of twelve months, would be engaged in each and all of these pursuits and occupations.

Mr. Davies, quoting from Manship's *Book of the Foundation and Antiquitye of the Town of Gt. Yarmouthe*, gives us an interesting account of a dispute which arose between the Yarmouth bailiffs and two representatives of the notable Paston family concerning the renting of certain eel-setts on the rivers Yare, Bure, and Waveney. From this account, which is one of the earliest references to the old-time Broadsmen, we learn that in the year 1576 there were thirty-eight eel-setts or stations, hired by fishermen at a nominal rent of a penny a year. Until the bailiffs superintended the letting of these setts, there seem to have been frequent disputes among the fishermen, though it was stated that they had ' an onlye custome among them, used tyme out of mynd, that yerlie, on the day of S. Margaret, every fysherman that could that daye, after rysenge, first come to anye of the said ele settes in anye of the said ryvers, and there staye and pytche a bowghe at the said ele sett, the same fysherman should have and injoye the same ele sett that yere, without yealdinge or payenge anye thinge for the same '. The bailiffs, however, after persuading the fishermen to leave to them the allotment of fishing stations,

seem to have been anxious to make greater profit by the letting of the setts ; for Mr. Paston, who laid the fishermen's case before the Privy Council, charged the bailiffs with having conspired with a certain John Everist, one of Queen Elizabeth's ordinary yeomen of the chamber, to obtain from the queen permission to demand for the ' fishing places ' a rental of thirty pounds a year, which, we are told, would have resulted in the taking away of the ' whole lyvenge of the poor fyshermen '. This, Mr. Paston urged, would have been against the interest of the general public ; for it was by the fishermen's industry that ' the citie of Norwiche and the countye of Norf. and Suff. had been plentifully provided in their kyndes of fyshe in the comon marketts, and for reasonable pryses '. The fishermen appear to have won their case, but the Yarmouth bailiffs' claim to the conservancy of the rivers for ten miles upwards from Yarmouth was granted.

The best description of an old-time Broadsmen that I know of is that given by the Rev. Richard Lubbock in his *Observations on the Fauna of Norfolk*. It has often been quoted ; but it is so good, and so admirably summarizes the Broadsmen's various occupations, that I cannot refrain from reproducing it here. ' When I first visited the Broads,' Mr. Lubbock writes, ' I found here and there an occupant, squatted down, as the Americans would call it, on the verge of a pool, who relied almost entirely on shooting and fishing for the support of himself and family, and lived in a truly primitive manner. I particularly remember one hero of this description. " Our Broad ", as he always called the extensive pool by which his cottage stood, was his microcosm—his world ; the islands in it were his gardens of the Hesperides ; its opposite extremity his *Ultima Thule*. Wherever his thoughts wandered, they could not get beyond the circle of his beloved lake ; indeed, I never knew them aberrant but once, when he informed me, with a doubting air, that he had sent his wife and his two eldest children to a fair at a country village two miles off, that their ideas might expand by travel : as he sagely observed, they had never been away from " our Broad ". I went into his house at the dinner hour, and found the whole party going to fall to most thankfully upon a roasted herring-gull, killed,



EEL-PICKING





of course, on "our Broad". His life presented no vicissitudes but an alternation of marsh employment. In winter, after his day's reed-cutting, he might be found regularly posted at nightfall, waiting for the flight of fowl, or paddling after them on the open water. With the first warm days of February he launched his fleet of trimmers, pike finding a ready sale at his own door to those who bought them to sell again in the Norwich market. As soon as the pike had spawned, and were out of season, the eels began to occupy his attention, and lapwings' eggs to be diligently sought for. In the end of April, the island in his watery domain was frequently visited for the sake of shooting the ruffs which resorted thither on their first arrival. As the days grew longer and hotter, he might be found searching, in some smaller pools near his house, for the shoals of tench as they commenced spawning. Yet a little longer, and he began marsh mowing—his gun always laid ready upon his coat, in case flappers should be met with. By the middle of August teal came to a wet corner near his cottage, snipes began to arrive, and he was often called upon to exercise his vocal powers on the curlews that passed to and fro. By the end of September good snipe-shooting was generally to be met with in his neighbourhood; and his accurate knowledge of the marshes, his unassuming good humour and zeal in providing sport for those who employed him, made him very much sought after as a sporting guide by snipe shots and fishermen; and his knowledge of the habits of different birds enabled him to give useful information to those who collected them.'

Mr. Lubbock then goes on to say that these hardy fennemen were great supporters of an old Norfolk pastime called 'camping', which required muscle and endurance of pain beyond common limits, and 'somewhat resembled the *pancratium* of the ancients, but was rather more severe'. This game, which seems almost to have been confined to the eastern counties, somewhat resembled Rugby football, but was far rougher, the players often receiving fatal injuries. There were no rules to prevent what would now be considered foul play; pushing, tripping, striking, and kicking of players were permitted; and the game often ended in a free fight, in

which the spectators joined. Villages were matched against villages, Hundreds against Hundreds, and counties against counties ; and so long as there was an equal number of players on each side, there was no limit to the number who took part in a game. Contemporary writers maintained that it was a noble and manly sport, and remarked upon the ' animated scene ' presented by twenty or thirty youths, stripped to the skin, rushing ' full *ding* ' at each other, amid the shouting of half the population of the surrounding villages. When a large football was used, the game was called ' kicking camp ' ; if the players wore shoes, it was known as ' savage camp '. It must have been a game of ' savage camp ' which was contested on Diss Common between teams representing Norfolk and Suffolk. There were three hundred players on each side, and when the Norfolk men came on to the field they tauntingly asked the Suffolk men whether they had brought their coffins with them ! The Suffolk men, however, were victorious. Nine deaths resulted from this ' game ' within a fortnight. Camping fell into disrepute towards the end of the eighteenth century, on account of its frequent fatalities ; but I once met an old Breydoner who was present at a match contested at Burgh Castle. It was, he believed, the last camping game ever played in Broadland. His father was one of the players, and he feared every moment that he would be killed.

But it is with the Broadsmen's methods of gaining a livelihood rather than with his few pastimes that I wish to deal here. At the time when the Rev. R. Lubbock wrote his description of a typical Broadsmen, the Acts of Parliament existing for the protection of wild birds were seldom enforced, and though Norwich and Yarmouth claimed jurisdiction over parts of the rivers, there were no useful regulations for the preservation of fresh-water fishes : the gunner could shoot and the fisherman net whenever and almost wherever they chose. True, so long ago as the end of the fourteenth century, it was enacted that ' no manner of artificer, labourer, nor any other layman ' not possessing lands to the value of £10 a year should hunt with dogs or use ferrets ; and in the reign of Henry VIII a law was passed which made it unlawful to

destroy, except with the long-bow, 'dukkes, mallardes, wygeons teales, wyldgeese, and dyverse other kyndes of wyldfowle', between the end of May and the end of August; also it was by the same Act provided that between March 1st and June 30th the eggs of 'byttour, heroune, shovelard, malarde, tele', and other wild-fowl should not be taken. But even if there had been a disposition to enforce the Acts, Broadland was a district in which they could be safely ignored. No water-bailiff in silently gliding punt haunted the waterways at night, and in the daytime hid among the riverside reeds. Under the eyes of every one who cared to watch him, the fisherman hauled in his draw-net full of roach and bream, and the gunner brought down mallard, widgeon, and teal. I have talked with men who remembered those days—and who themselves shouldered the heavy, long-barrelled muzzle-loaders and spread the hundred-yards-long draw-nets—and they spoke of them as though they were the golden age of their world—the Broadland. As one of them said to me, 'We thought little then of catching a ton of roach and bream in a day, in the Beccles or Norwich rivers (the Waveney or the Yare); and we often put back three parts of our catch because we could not sell so much fish. At the sluices of the mill-dykes we netted pike by the stone, or we caught them by means of copper-wire snares. Then the Breydon flats were often white with fowl, and a punt-gunner could get as many as eighty at a single shot of his big swivel-gun. Now, in spite of protectin' an' presarvin' there ain't quarter the quantity of fish in the rivers nor nuthin' like sich flocks of fowl on the flats. On Oulton Broad alone there were seven nets used regularly when the fish were in season. And talkin' about fowl, I've seen two acres of Breydon mud-flat wholly covered with them; when they rose the whole flat seemed to rise. Some of the gunners got a bushel skep full at a shot. I myself have killed nineteen out of twenty-one stints at a single shot of a shoulder-gun. Large flocks of cormorants used to come to Breydon then; but of course they worn't no good to the gunners, who only wanted fowl what would sell.'

During the first half of the nineteenth century fish were so plentiful in the Broadland rivers that few people cared how

they were caught, or whether they were caught at all. Bushels of roach, bream, and rudd were left to rot on the river banks, or cast on to the land for manure, because no one would buy them, and the Broadsmen did not want them for food. But the fishermen kept on netting, and generally managed to sell the best of the fish they caught. Hundred-yard draw-nets were used in the Broad and rivers, 'buskin' or bushing nets about thirty yards long were spread along the borders of the reed-beds, out of which the fish were driven by beating the reeds with poles, and smaller, fine-meshed nets were used in the dykes. None of these nets, however, were of such fine mesh as those used by the Breydon smelters: these were so fine as to cut the fingers of the women who mended them. Pike were not only netted, but taken on liggers or trimmers, consisting of small, tightly tied bundles of rushes, to which a short double-hooked line was attached, usually baited with a small roach.

Abundant as were the fish, extensive and indiscriminate netting eventually resulted in a very noticeable decrease in the quantity of large and fair-sized ones; and anglers, who found their 'takes' gradually growing smaller, took exception to the fishermen's destructive methods. So long ago as 1857, steps were taken to regulate the netting, but with little success. Ten years later, after pressure had been put upon them, some members of the Norwich Corporation took action, and under the City of Norwich Act of 1867 certain restrictions were placed upon the fishermen. But Norwich had jurisdiction over the Yare down to Hardley Cross only; and as Yarmouth's jurisdiction over the lower waters was merely nominal, the new regulations had little effect. Under cover of night the fishermen netted the forbidden waters, carrying the fish down to Yarmouth for sale or dispatch to market; and though now and again some of them were proceeded against and fined, dodging the river-watchers was considered good sport, and the game went merrily on. Nor was anything effective done until about the year 1875. A well-known fish-poacher then, after a successful night's netting, carried his catch to Norwich, where it was conveyed through the streets in a hand-cart. The cart broke down, and the catch, chiefly





A SUCCESSFUL SHOT AT WADERS



consisting of roach and bream, fell out on to the road in the presence of a considerable number of people. This opened their eyes to the fact, hitherto ignored except by anglers, that, in spite of the regulations, immense quantities of fresh-water fish were being caught almost daily, and efforts were made to obtain an Act which would make netting illegal. The late Mr. Frank Buckland, whom the Home Secretary had instructed to report upon the state of the Norfolk Fisheries, was approached and urged to inquire into the conditions and abuses existing in connexion with the Broads and rivers.

Mr. Buckland was too keenly interested in such matters to ignore such an appeal. He visited Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Norwich, and other places, and examined a large number of witnesses. He reported that not only the Broads but the rivers were extensively netted; that the fish taken were sent to inland towns and sold for a shilling a stone, or used for manure; that the rivers were usually netted at night, and tons of small fish taken during the spawning season. The Yarmouth town clerk told him that 'there was no close time on the Broads, but they were fished whenever it was considered likely that a market could be found for the fish. There was no doubt that a large number of fry were thus destroyed, as the nets sometimes used in this fishing were of very small mesh. The Mayor and Corporation had no jurisdiction over the fisheries. No doubt in former years the Corporation assumed certain rights with regard to the river-fishing, but no such rights now existed.' Another witness said 'he frequently had seen as much as two tons of fish in the hold of one wherry; they consisted of roach, bream, perch, pike, etc., of all sizes and ages'. The evidence of other witnesses proved lamentable diminution both in the size and quantity of the fish. One man stated that he had known two tons of fresh-water fish to be sold for £7 10s. a ton—not a farthing a pound. Tons of fish were thrown on to the land. One old man of ninety, who lived at Ludham, said that 'formerly he could go out with his pole and tow (rod and line) and catch a rare mess of good fish in a couple of hours, and now there were hardly any left'. A Lowestoft net-maker stated that the nets used by the river fishermen were of such small mesh that

they would catch fish no bigger than an ordinary cedar pencil. At a meeting at Norwich, at which Mr. Buckland was present, it was resolved that legislation for the preservation of the navigable waters was urgently required ; that this legislation should extend to the Broads, at least so far as to secure a close time during the spawning season ; and that all netting, except for eels and smelts, should be prohibited. Mr. Buckland agreed with this resolution, and recommended that the Home Secretary should announce an annual close time (March 1st to May 31st) for all fish in the Broads and rivers ; that a local Board of Conservators should be given power to make by-laws as to the mesh of nets, use of liggers, cutting of weeds, etc. ; and that trawling in the rivers (which had been carried on by some of the fishermen) should be put a stop to.

In 1877 the Norfolk and Suffolk Fisheries Act was passed. Under this Act certain by-laws were made, but they did not put a stop to all netting. Some persons had urged that when fish had attained the weight of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb. they should be taken for food ; so the use of nets with a mesh measuring three inches from knot to knot was permitted. Five years later, it was discovered that with a net having a mesh slightly under three inches from knot to knot a fishermen had succeeded in taking two tons of fish during a few hours' netting. As a result of this discovery, the by-laws were altered, and netting, except for eels and smelts, was entirely prohibited. Smelt-netting was regulated, and only allowed in certain parts of the rivers. Pike snaring and spearing were made illegal.

The passing of the Norfolk and Suffolk Fisheries Act, and the Acts of 1872, 1876, and 1880 for the protection of wild birds, made it impossible for the men who had hitherto existed almost entirely upon what they shot and netted to do so any longer. Only the eel-catchers and smelt-fishers were able to earn a little money by netting at certain seasons ; and in 1881 an attempt was made to do away with eel-setts, but this proved unsuccessful. The men who were thus deprived of their chief means of livelihood naturally did not at first take kindly to their altered circumstances, and for some time the water-bailiffs and police had much difficulty in dealing with

those who broke the new laws. As an example of the defiant attitude adopted by some of the fishermen may be quoted the case of one fish-poacher, who, after the passing of the Fisheries Act, paid nearly £300 in fines, and admitted that he had made as much as £74 in one week by illegal fishing.



## CHAPTER VI

### SOME BROADLAND FOLK OF TO-DAY

NETTING, except for eels and smelts, having been made illegal, and wild-fowl shooting forbidden during certain months of the year, the men of the Broads and rivers had to turn to other occupations in order to gain a livelihood. A few of them, as I have said, continued for a while to defy the law ; but the majority grumblingly submitted to the inevitable, cut up their draw-nets, and used them to keep the birds off their garden-beds. Fortunately for them, there was other work to be done on the Broads, rivers, and marshes. Some of them became wherry-men ; others contented themselves with eel-catching and reed- and rush-cutting ; yet others found employment in cattle-tending, marsh-mowing, and 'drawing' or clearing out the marsh dykes. And as the Broadland became increasingly popular as a holiday resort, the demand for men who could sail yachts and pleasure-wherries increased correspondingly ; and during the summer months the services of some of the old netters, who were used to boat-sailing and knew every nook and corner of Broadland, were engaged by Oulton, Wroxham, Norwich, and Yarmouth yacht-letters. Instances are also recorded of fish-poachers becoming water-bailiffs, to the delight of their poaching friends and dismay of their poaching enemies ; but, with one or two exceptions, these appointments did not prove entirely satisfactory to the preservation societies. So it will be seen that there was a variety of employment awaiting the men who had to abandon fish-netting, and I do not think there is a single case on record in which the passing of the Norfolk and Suffolk Fisheries Act resulted in the pinch of poverty being felt in any humble Broadland home. Of course, even now there are men who grumble at not being allowed to shoot and net wherever and whenever they please ; but the

majority of the natives of Broadland admit that protection and preservation of fowl and fish are desirable, and, so far as the fish are concerned, have had good results.

Among the Broadsmen whom the visitor encounters, the wherryman, though decreasing in number, deserve first mention. Cruise where you will, not only on the main rivers, but up the Chet to Loddon, the Thurne to Hickling, and the Ant to North Walsham, and you find that wherever your yacht can go the wherryman has gone before you. Sometimes he is alone, for the Broadland wherry—a type of craft seen nowhere else in England—is so rigged that one man can sail it; but generally he has a companion, sometimes a man or boy, sometimes his wife. Usually he is a man whose father was a wherryman before him; but occasionally he is one who has been to sea in a Yarmouth or Lowestoft trawler or drifter, and has grown tired of a rough, seafaring life. All through the year he is afloat on the rivers, carrying cargoes of coal, corn, hay, and timber between the coast ports and the inland towns and staithes, and often his only home is his cramped little cabin aft of the long wide hold. There he cooks his food over a small stove, shelters when the weather is bad and the wind against him, and sleeps when his day's voyage is done. But should the wind be favourable he often sails all night as well as all day; for a head wind or a windless day often means many hours' hard quanting—that is, pushing the wherry along by means of a long pole. Only when the rivers are ice-bound does he take a holiday, and then, leaving his wherry frozen up at some staithe or marshside mooring, he disports himself on skates or 'pattens', lounges over a fire in a riverside inn, or spends his time and money at the nearest town. But should the ice on the rivers be so thin that a passage can be forced through it, he will continue his voyaging; and if his hold is empty he will often fill it with ice for sale to the fish-merchants at the nearest port.

On the upper waters of the main rivers and on the narrow tributary streams a wherry is perhaps the most awkward obstacle a yacht can encounter, for its wide hull and large sail seem to block up the whole channel. But the wherryman is an expert at getting out of such difficulties, and as he is

usually patient and good-natured, a yachtsman generally does well to follow his advice. Of late years the native voyagers have had a good deal to put up with at the hands of unskilled navigators, many of whom had never sailed a boat until they came on to the Broads ; but one seldom hears of a wherryman treating a stranger with incivility or refusing to assist him if he requires aid. In return for this the least a yachtsman can do is not to hinder a wherryman if he can help it, remembering that, as Mr. Davies has pointed out, the wherryman are on the rivers on business, while the yachtsmen are there simply for pleasure. To the summer cruiser it may seem that the wherryman's life is an enviable one. He sees him daily lounging at his tiller while he sails between sunny meads musical with larks' songs. Wild flowers of every hue deck the banks by which he glides, leaping fish make rippling rings around his wherry, the fragrance of water-mint or new-mown hay is borne to him on the breeze, and at the end of his day's voyage there is a cosy inn awaiting him ! But the summer voyager fails to look at the other side of the picture, to take into account the stormy winter days, when whirling snowsqualls hide the marshlands and heap high snowdrifts against the river walls ; when cutting hail smites the wherryman's face and ice-coated ropes numb his hands ; when the icy wind blears his eyes and the frost whitens his beard and fringes his eyelashes with beads of ice. Then the wherryman's lot is far from enviable, and few are the men, however mean their condition, who would change places with him.

The wherry is one of the most picturesque features of the Broadland waterways, rivalling the dainty yachts in shapeliness and grace of movement. Sailing closer to the wind than any other vessel afloat, and easily handled, it is just the craft for navigating these narrow winding streams. Seen from a distance, it often seems to be sailing on a sea of meadow grass and wild flowers, and to make little headway ; but viewed from a river bank or yacht's deck its sailing qualities can be properly appreciated. Its curious wire-framed flag, which resembles those of the Scheveningen and Maasluis fishing boats which visit Lowestoft and Yarmouth at Christmas-time, emphasizes the Dutch aspect the windmills give the marshlands. Wherries



POTTER HEICHAM BRIDGE

Fank Southeate





are as much a part of Broadland as are reed-beds and wind-mills.

Even more interesting than the wherryman to the visitor, if he have time and opportunity to make their acquaintance and study their methods, are the eel-catchers, a very few of whom still have their quaint little ark-like house-boats by the riverside. These men usually live in the Broadland hamlets or in isolated cottages on the borders of the marshes, and they have several means of gaining a livelihood ; but during the summer and autumn they can be found almost every night in the neighbourhood of their house-boats, keeping watch so that their setts may not be damaged by passing yachts or wherries. In order that their method of eel-catching may be understood, it is necessary to know a little about the life-history of *Anguilla vulgaris*, the common eel.

Until lately the reproduction of this common species was a great mystery. Even now there are marshmen and fishermen who will seriously assure you that eels are bred out of mud ; not so very long ago they believed that chopped horse-hair would, if thrown into the water, turn into eels. Even the more enlightened of them will not credit the fact that the species is not viviparous : one old man, whom I know well, told me he had found young eels or elvers inside larger ones which he had cut open. The presence of worm-like parasites in the eels no doubt accounted for this confident statement. Another old man, who is a well-known eel-catcher, said, ' I don't believe the elvers come out of the sea at all. I believe they are bred out of the mud. You may see thousands of them going through Mutford Lock in April, and it's my opinion they come out of the mud in Lake Lothing. I've opened a good many hundred eels in my time, and I never saw a trace of spawn in any one of them.' I told him that it was the opinion of naturalists that all the eels were bred in the sea. He replied, ' If all the elvers are hatched off in the sea, how is it we get eels of all sizes in ponds right away on highlands and in the middle of fields, where there are no dykes or drains to connect them with the rivers or the sea ? I know eels can get out of the water and crawl about on the land, because I've seen three of them lying on a marsh and the tracks they

made when they came out of a dyke ; but I don't believe they can crawl across roads and fields to ponds a long way off any dyke or river.' Biologists, however, are now satisfied that *Anguilla vulgaris* spawns in deep-sea water. In an interesting paper published in the *Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society*, Mr. T. Southwell, F.Z.S. draws attention to Dr. Grassi's discoveries in the Straits of Messina, where strong local currents bring large quantities of the larvae (*Leptocephali*) of the common eel to the surface. These larval forms, which were formerly regarded as those of certain kinds of marine fishes, gradually develop into the tiny eels or elvers which in spring swarm up from the sea into the rivers.

Until a few years ago it was generally believed that there were at least three species of eels in the Broadland rivers ; indeed, some eel-catchers affirmed that there were no less than seven. But it has been discovered that the so-called broad-nosed eels, which were considered to be a distinct species, are simply barren females of *Anguilla vulgaris*. These broad-nosed eels are hardly ever taken in the setts which are spread across the rivers for the capture of the sharp-nosed or silver eels when they are ' running ' towards the sea. A sett consists of a close-meshed net, the bottom of which is weighted and rests on the river bed, while the top is buoyed up on the surface of the water. In this network wall one or more openings lead into circular nets or ' pods '. The setts are used at night when the tide is ebbing, the network wall being then, by means of ropes and blocks, raised from the river bed (where it lies during the day) and so forms an impassable obstacle to the descending swarms of eels. The latter, on finding their passage obstructed, seek an opening in the net. They find that which leads into a circular ' pod ', from which, when they have once entered it, funnel-shaped circles of net prevent their escape. Seventy years ago, one hundred and ten stones of eels were taken in one night at Fishley on the Bure ; and Mr. Davies tells us he once met a man who had taken three hundred stones in four nights at Hardley Cross on the Yare. Apparently eels are nothing like so plentiful now, for the existing netters consider a catch of forty stones a remarkably good one, and a ten or fifteen stones ' take ' is looked upon as



AN EEL SETT



satisfactory. Often, however, the setts are spread night after night and only two or three eels taken. The old eel-catcher whom I have just quoted recently had such an experience. But in his case it was not lack of eels which made his night's fishing unprofitable. Unknown to him, a sunken log prevented the lower side of his sett touching the river bed, and left a passage open through which the eels continued their journey downstream.

The eel-catchers do not rely entirely on their setts for the taking of eels. Small-meshed bow-nets are often baited and sunk in the rivers, and nets not unlike small setts are used at the sluices of the mill dykes. By the last-mentioned method seventy-four stones of eels were taken in one night out of Leathes Ham, a small pool or pond adjoining Lake Lothing. Eel-lines are often laid out in the Broads and rivers; and in the springtime eel-spearing or 'picking' is extensively practised, not only in the Broads and rivers, but in the marsh dykes. The spear or pick consists of a 'head' of from four to six long barbed teeth, fixed to the end of a long pole. The teeth are set so close together that when the spear is thrust into the mud an eel caught between them seldom escapes being drawn ashore or into the eel-catcher's boat. Yet another method is 'bobbing' or 'babbing', which is often indulged in as a pastime. A bunch of worsted-threaded worms is fastened to a line attached to a pole. Seated in a boat or by the riverside, the fisherman lowers the bunch of worms to the bed of the river, and then 'bobs' it gently up and down. As soon as an eel bites into one of the worms, its teeth become entangled in the worsted, and the 'angler', who feels its tugging, carefully lifts it out of the water and lets it fall into a tub which floats beside him. In some parts of Broadland it is no uncommon sight to see old men, with lanterns beside them, bobbing all night by the riverside. I had my first experience as an eel-bobber on the upper waters of the Waveney. My instructor was a marshman. He said, 'When you feel a little pull at th' line jist hyst it up carefully an' drop th' worams inter th' keeler (tub). Ony you musn't be too hasty about it, or you may shake him orf and luse him. Thas how I mean,' he went on, as he brought up an eel wriggling on



the end of his line, and knocked it off the bab by swinging it against the inside of the tub. 'See, you ha' got one tu.' I had unconsciously followed his example when he raised his bab and had babbed my first eel.

But the worker of a sett looks upon bobbing as simply playing at eel-catching, and it is to him you must go if you wish to see how the eels are caught which supply the London and other markets. If possible, you should spend a night with him in his house-boat—it will not be a very costly experience—for then you can see him haul up his pods and empty them of his night's catch. You will gain some idea, too, of how such men as he spend many nights of the year, and of how comfortable and content he is in his cramped little cabin. If the night be chilly, he will probably light a fire in his stove, and the temperature of the cabin will soon become tropical; but you are not likely to run such risk as did Farmer Oak in his shepherd's hut, for the house-boats generally have a ventilator which will not wholly close, and most of the time the door will be open, so that your companion can keep an eye on his sett. And you will hear the rats rustling in the hovers, the pheasants crowing on the marshes, the fish leaping, and the water rippling along the keel of the boat—sounds which may lull you to sleep, to dream of pleasant pastures where the cattle stand knee-deep in the grass, and rivers winding between banks decked with mauve-flowered mints and yellow water-flags. If you succeed in keeping awake, you will hear from your companion much curious lore concerning the wild life of the rivers and marshes, and many strange tales about huge hauls of fish and great slaughterings of fowl. Maybe, if he be an old man, and you have won his confidence, he will entertain you with stories of old-time fish-poaching escapades, of midnight trips on the waters above Hardley Cross, which were the first to be preserved, or of smelt-netting in a certain reach near Reedham where the smelts always seem to be more plentiful and of better quality than those taken at Burgh, but where the using of a smelt-net is strictly forbidden. Should he be in a mood for relating such reminiscences the night will seem only too brief, and when you leave the cabin in the early morning, and are greeted by the cheery little

reed-birds, you will feel that your novel experience has not been an unprofitable one.

Besides the eel-catchers, almost the only men who use nets in the Broadland waters are the smelt-fishers, a few of whom, during certain months of the year, spread their nets near the Burgh end of Breydon. Formerly a good many men were engaged in smelting; but now there are only a very few men and boys, though the average price they get for smelts—two shillings a score—would seem fairly remunerative. Burgh is not easily accessible by land, so very few people have an opportunity for seeing the smelters at work. It is a lonesome place at which to moor at night. The deserted cement works and cottages on the shore, backed by a dark belt of woods and brooded over by that grim old Roman stronghold, the so-called castle, add to its dreariness. And the yachtsman who spends a night there must make sure that his moorings are secure, for when the tide ebbs the outrush of the waters of the Yare and Waveney is strong and rapid, and if a yacht's moorings drag, its occupants may awake to find themselves stranded on a Breydon mud-flat, or in collision with that awkward obstacle to navigation, the Breydon railway bridge.

In winter, one of the most familiar sights in Broadland is a reed-cutter at work on a Broad or by the riverside. For the reed-cutter's harvest is a winter one, beginning about Christmas, when the blade is off the reeds, and lasting until March or April, when the appearance of the 'colts' or young reeds puts a stop to the cutting. Eel-catchers, marshmen, millmen, and the men who sail the cruising yachts, take part in this belated harvest, which comes at a time when there is little else for them to do in the daytime, and only wild-fowl to be watched for at dusk and dawn. Scythe and meag are used in cutting the reeds, and the cutter works either in a wide, flat-bottomed marsh-boat, or on a plank projecting from a boat or laid flat in a cleared space among the reeds. If, however, the reeds grow in shallow water, the men put on wading-boots and work in the water. The cut reeds are laid in the boat or on a large reed-raft, and rowed, quanted, or towed to the place where they are to be stacked. There they are tied in bundles or 'shooves', five of which are supposed to

have an aggregate circumference of six feet, and they are sold by the fathom, a fathom of reeds being five 'shoooves'. They are used for various purposes, such as supporting builders' plasterwork, thatching cottages, park lodges, and ornamental boat-houses, and screening young shrubs and fruit trees; but the demand for them has decreased considerably since the days when there were 'scythe rights' on the reed fens and the reeds were carefully cultivated. But there are still many hundred acres of reeds in Broadland, and the cutting of them means a welcome addition to many scanty incomes. So, too, does the cutting and selling of 'gladden' and a species of rush locally known as 'bolder'; but turf or peat cutting, which formerly found employment for many of the marshmen, can hardly now be called a profitable business. Still, there are a few men who cut and dry the riverside hovers and the boggy surface soil of some of the swampy lands; for peat is a good and cheap substitute for coal in the hearths of the marshmen's cottage homes.

If one wishes to know the kind of life that is led by the natives of Broadland, one cannot do better than leave the rivers and Broadlands for a while, go and live on one of the isolated marsh farms, and make the acquaintance of its occupier and any men whom he may have in his employ. I have in mind a typical marsh farmer, a tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed, ruddy-cheeked giant, who might have stepped out of the pages of the *Saga of Burnt Njal*. He passes his time very differently to the upland farmer, whose success or failure to make farming pay depend chiefly upon market prices and the weather. To the marsh farmer the price and progress of roots and cereals is a matter of comparative indifference: so long as he gets his hay carted and stacked without its being damaged by rain or flood, markets and weather do not trouble him. In fact, to call him a farmer is almost a misnomer. His occupations are almost as numerous as those of the Rev. R. Lubbock's typical Broadsmen. True, he is a dairy-farmer—in a small way; and he keeps pigs and fowls; but he is also a fisherman and wild-fowler, reed-harvester and osier-grower. The presence of fowl on his marshes is, during the shooting season, always a sufficient excuse for his taking down his gun from its resting-place



Frank. Southgate.

TOWING THE REED HARVEST





above the hearth, and leaving the farmstead to his wife's care for hours together. When the eels are 'running', he sleeps during the day, and is to be found by the riverside or at some dyke-mouth at night, busy with a sluice-net or sett. In winter, when he drives his cart to the nearest market-town, it is as likely to contain mallard as to be laden with pigs and poultry. To the larger towns, where the upland farmer sends his milk, the marsh farmer sends his catches of eels. When he goes down on to his rush-marshes, it is more often in the hope of flushing snipe or finding plovers' eggs than to see if those marshes are ready to be mown; when he reaps his midwinter reed-harvest, his breech-loader always lies handy in his boat. Holding his nose between his thumb and finger, he can imitate the call of a drake so accurately as to bring wild duck to the flighting-ground where he is awaiting them. He knows the cries and call-notes of the wild fowl of the marshes as well as the upland farmer knows the cock's shrill clarion at dawn. The frosty weather, which holds the plough-share fast in the furrow, brings him out of his bed long before daybreak, grey dawn finding him crouched in a reed-bed or on some river wall, waiting for the flighting fowl.

His lonely life on the open, level marshlands teaches him self-reliance; the necessity for constant effort in order to 'make both ends meet' compels him to make the most of opportunities. He seldom spends an idle day. Shooting, fishing, eel-netting, marsh-mowing, cattle-tending, reed-cutting and reed-stacking, rush-cutting, dyke-drawing, and wall-mending—these and other occupations leave him little time for listless lounging. As a rule, he performs nearly all these tasks unaided, but occasionally, as in the case of my Viking friend, he engages the services of a marshman. He is learned in the strange lore of the lonesome lowlands, where curious old customs and superstitions linger, and men live near to Nature, reading her secrets and understanding and forecasting her many moods. His speech is flavoured with quaint colloquialisms, learnt from his father and mother, who lived and died among the marshes, or from the heavy-gaited, drowsy-eyed marshmen with whom, in his youthful days, he fraternized while they worked with crome and dydle. He calls a marsh-fog

a 'roke'—a word which has come down to him from his Norse ancestors ; he talks of fish 'roudding', meaning spawning ; a sudden wind-squall he describes as a 'rodger's-blast' ; and when he takes his dinner with him to the dykeside, he carries it in a 'frail' slung on a 'crome stick'. Strange old saws and rockstuffs suggest themselves to him as naturally as they did to the marshlanders of a century ago. If a wart appears on his hand, he lets a 'dodman' (snail) crawl over it—an infallible cure ; and before the days of currency notes he never received a piece of gold without spitting on it—for luck. He usually has some curious catch-phrase which he interjects into his conversation. In the case of one man I know this phrase is, 'As the boy said.' I asked him the distance from his house to a certain windmill. He replied, 'About a mile an' a half over wet an' dry, as th' boy said.' Apparently that boy had forestalled him in making most of his remarks and replies.

'Like master like man' is a saying which has obvious application to the marsh farmer I have mentioned and his man, Owd Bob Owdham'. Setting aside a difference in age—Owd Bob is about fifteen years older than the farmer—they are so much alike in tastes, habits, and conversation, that a stranger, even when he has spent days in their company, has difficulty in determining which is master and which is man. In the end he probably decides that Owd Bob is master, for his manner of addressing the farmer is frequently dictatorial. I overheard him thus talking to his employer : 'Well, bor, yow may say what yow like, but yow ont niver make me belaave as how this ain't a sight better sleeve-weskit than th' one what yow browt home from Yarmouth last Martinmas. Bor, I woun't chenge wi' yow, not if yow give me yar cord britches as wool ; blow me if I would ! I don't belaave yow know what's gude moleskin an' what ain't, dang me if I du !' Lengthy arguments concerning the working of the farm are as frequent between Owd Bob and the farmer as between the latter and his wife, and Owd Bob generally has the 'best' of them. In fact, I think he considers his age entitles him to his own way. But he is always on the alert to further his master's interests. I heard him bargaining with a thatcher about the roofing of a shed. The difference between them as to what the charge

should be only amounted to half a crown ; but they argued about it nearly a whole morning, and in the end Owd Bob got the thatcher to agree to his (Owd Bob's) terms. He accomplished this by threatening to ' du th' job hisself '.

To strangers who approach him, Owd Bob is the embodiment of reserve and taciturnity ; but when he has ' summed up ' a man, and the result satisfies him, he gradually admits him to his confidence. He reveals himself possessed of a keen sense of humour, and an insight into the foibles of marshland humanity that makes him the delight and terror of those with whom he fraternizes at the nearest alehouse. Loutish youths have such a wholesome dread of the sting which often lurks in an apparently innocent interrogation, that they avoid him as carefully as they do the village policeman ; while his quickness at turning the tables on a rustic jester has made his tongue more feared than his burly master's fist. The natural gift of correct observation and deduction which serves him so well in his dealings with men, is little less useful to him when he studies the habits of the wild-fowl of the marshes, concerning which he possesses a knowledge the more valuable in that it is acquired from Nature instead of from books. True, he often identifies birds by names unfamiliar to the average ornithologist ; but if you ask him to show you a reed-warbler's nest or a stream where you may see a kingfisher, he will soon find one for you. He lives in a thatched cottage in the midst of the marshes—lives there alone ; for he is a bachelor, his only living companions being a rusty-brown retriever and a wing-clipped hooded crow.

About half a mile from the farm to which Owd Bob devotes his time and exceptional abilities, there is a marshland staithe where wherries moor and wherry men land to spend an hour or so at a neighbouring inn. It is always a puzzle to me how the landlord of that inn manages to exist, for his only customers during nine months of the year are the wherry men and the few marshmen and gunners who occasionally come to be ferried in a marsh boat across the river. I made his acquaintance one day when he was helping Owd Bob and the farmer at their marsh-mowing, and it was he who told me that ' in his young time ' jack-o'-lanterns, or ' lantern men ', as he called them, were not infrequently seen flickering over the boggy marshes.

This is a phenomenon it has never been my good fortune to see ; but Lady Cranworth of Letton, in Norfolk, records, in the *Eastern Counties Magazine*, that an old horseman on the Letton estate has ' seen them scores of times running about '. There is a belief among the men of the marshes that lantern men are dangerous ; anyhow, the wherry-men used to be afraid of them, and would discharge guns at them to disperse them ; and Lady Cranworth states that an old man's advice concerning them was this, ' If the lantern man lights upon you, the best thing is to throw yourself flat on your face and hold your breath.' At Syleham, a parish on the upper waters of the Waveney, will-o'-the-wisps were formerly numerous, and were known as the ' Syleham lights ' ; but they are not seen now. The old innkeeper had ' heerd tell ' of a ball of flame being seen floating across the marshes, which, when it reached the river, seemed to cling for a while to the mast of a wherry—a story I have seen in a little book dealing with the natural history and phenomena of Broadland, and which reminds one of the seamen's corporasants.

It is only, as I have sufficiently emphasized, by mixing with the wherry-men, eel-catchers, reed-cutters, and marsh-folk that you can attain any satisfactory knowledge of the inner life, the thoughts, beliefs, customs, and methods of the typical inhabitants of Broadland. By simply watching them while they pursue their various callings you will not learn very much ; you must gain their confidence, see them not only on the rivers and marshes and by the dykesides, but also in their humble homes. You must not approach them with that marked condescension which is as irritating as it is ridiculous ; if you do, you will find yourself vainly knocking at a closed door. But if you will help to tow a reed-raft, haul ashore a gun-punt, share a frugal meal, part with a portion of your day's angling ' take ' to help provide a dinner, and, above all, occasionally try to quench an apparently insatiable thirst, you will often be well rewarded. For the native of Broadland, unless he be a hired boatman or yachtsman, is, like the Romany, somewhat suspicious of the undisguised curiosity of strangers, whose interrogations only result in his displaying an amazing but entirely fictitious ignorance.





MARSHMEN WEED-LIFTING





## CHAPTER VII

### THE YARE AND ITS BROADS

ALTHOUGH not, from the pleasure-seeker's point of view, the best of the Broadland rivers, the Yare is, and has been for many centuries, the chief Norfolk waterway, and before the days of railways it was by means of its trading wherries and keels that the largest and most important town in East Anglia was supplied with its imported goods and dispatched its considerable exports to the coast. The scenery of its upper waters is in many places delightful, quaint old villages, pleasant parks, and flower-spangled meads bordering many miles of its course ; but, unfortunately for the cruiser in Broadland, these upper reaches are unnavigable except to rowing boats, and yachting parties have to confine their attention to that part of the river which lies below Norwich. Yet even below the fine old cathedral city the shores and waters of the Yare are not without charm, and between Norwich and Brundall there are several spots where the loveliness of reed-mirroring reaches and wooded uplands tempts summer voyagers to linger. For it is not until Brundall is passed that the bordering marshlands are so wide that their upland bounds recede to such a distance that the cruiser cannot appreciate their beauty ; above that point picturesque farms and the country homes of Norwich citizens, village church towers, and the varied foliage of birch, beech, elm, and fir are part of the landscapes of which the winding river, with its green reeds, yellow water-flags, silvery-leaved willows, and white poplar scrub is the chief feature. And even below Brundall there is Rockland Broad, whose wild, primitive aspect has a certain charm lacking in some of the lovelier Broads, suggesting as it does the vanished meres of Fenland. Many a pleasure-seeker, acting on the advice of a boatman whose great anxiety it is to make a speedy voyage from Norwich to Lowestoft or Yarmouth,

neglects to enter his dinghy and row up the half mile or so of dyke leading to Rockland, and so misses seeing what is, to my mind, one of the best of the Norfolk Broad.

Norwich is not the least beautiful of the cathedral cities of England ; the view of its church towers and sylvan surroundings, seen from its castle battlements or the high ground of Mousehold Heath, is very fine. Its inhabitants have called it the ' City in an Orchard ', and the sylvan scenery of some of its outlying parishes justifies the name. But often in summer, when a scorching sun makes the street pavements hot to the feet, and even in the quiet Close and the shadow of the cathedral walls the air is oppressive, a vision of green meadows, cool woods, and breeze-rippled streams comes to lure the gazer at Norman arches, ancient, quaintly gabled houses, and medieval carvings, away from old-world relics to a world where Nature reigns supreme and speaks to her worshippers with wild-life voices like those with which she greeted men ages before they took to heaping stones on stones and shaping them into strange designs. At such times even the ' City in an Orchard ' seems much like other cities where men toil within walls which keep out the pure air and sunlight, and the call of the birds, the streams, and the wind among the trees becomes almost irresistible. Then it is that the man whose eyes are weary of the streets' monotonous vistas gladly leaves the stifling city and inhales the fragrance of water-mint and dew-drenched meadow grass. Lying back in the stern of a boat, which, like a sea-bird, spreads white wings to waft itself over the water, he lets his gaze rove over meadow, stream, and woodland, listens to the rustling of reeds, the singing of birds, and the rippling of water, and says to himself :

Oh, this life  
Is nobler than attending for a check,  
Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,  
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk !

At no season of the year are the river reaches immediately below Norwich without beauty ; but in summer, when of Whitlingham's ruined church only the tower is visible, so dense is the foliage of the wooded hills bordering the river, there are few more delightful bits of scenery in Broadland. Norwich

folk have for a long time made this part of the Yare one of their chief holiday resorts ; the water frolics held here in the early years of the last century were so picturesque as to have provided a subject for one of the most interesting pictures in the Museum Gallery. With Crome, Cotman, Vincent, Stannard, and other famous Norwich artists it was a favourite haunt ; in the days when the Norwich school of artists flourished, much good work was done along the river banks. But the Norfolk angler, who looks upon the Yare as the best river for bream- and roach-fishing, seldom cares to linger on its loveliest reaches. Hastening past the long wood-crowned hill called Postwick Grove, and also, unless he be out after pike, the Wood's End Inn at Bramerton, with its pleasure gardens, he cruises on to Brundall, where, in the neighbourhood of those famous fishing centres, the Yare Hotel and Coldham Hall, he moors his boat to stakes at stem and stern, and prepares for some of the best coarse fishing to be had in England. As a rule, if he has chosen his time well, he enjoys good sport ; but even if his most tempting baits fail to lure the monster fish which are known to inhabit the Brundall and Surlingham waters, he, if he be a true disciple of Walton, cannot fail to recognize compensatory circumstances. As the old *Treatyse of Fysshynge* says, he can enjoy the 'swete aire of the swete savoure of the meede floures, that makyth hym hongry. He hereth the melodyous armony of foules. He seeth the yonge swannes, the heerons, ducks, cotes, and many other foules wyth their brodes, whyche me semyth better than alle the noyse of houndys, the blaste of hornys, and the scrye of foules that hunters, fawkeners, and fowlers can make.' But 'yf the angler take fysshe, surely thenne is there noo man merier thanne he is in his spyryte'.

But the voyager to whom the waters of the Yare are new will probably, when he reaches Brundall, be indisposed to angle until he has seen Surlingham, a small reedy Broad, which is best explored in a rowing boat. A long time ago, Surlingham was a fairly large Broad, but the rank luxuriance of its aquatic growths—its sedges, reeds, and swamp flowers—has reduced the open water to a few narrow channels and small pools, while the decay of this lacustrine vegetation has provided an

oozy bed for creeping roots and scattered flower seeds. So that now, when the cruiser enters Birch Creek, a channel a little way above the Yare Hotel, he finds himself shut in by dense reed jungles. These occasionally afford shelter for a flight-shooter, and are frequently 'beaten' by entomologists in search of the insect life which abounds in them. It is on such Broadas Surlingham, where there are alders growing just beyond the reed-beds, that the dotted footman, that peculiarly Broadland moth, should be looked for in August, and many rare beetles and hemipterae are found among the water plants of the sedgy and reedy margins. But it is for the hymenopterist that the neighbourhood of Brundall is a 'happy hunting-ground', for it was here that rare bee, *Macropis labiata*, was discovered and several other entomological prizes were first taken.

A notable feature of Surlingham was the old ice-house standing by the waterside. During severe winters this old sharp-gabled building used often to be stored with ice gathered from the Broad. At one time ice-gathering was quite a business with the Broadsmen and marshmen, who, when they had filled their boats, emptied the ice into a wherry bound for Yarmouth or Lowestoft, to be sold to the fish-packers on the markets. At Oulton it was no uncommon sight during frosty weather to see old hulks and smack-boats passing through Mutford Lock and down Lake Lothing, laden with cargoes of gleaming ice from the frozen 'hams' or inlets of Oulton Broad; but the local ice-manufacturing companies now provide all the ice needed, and the ice-gatherer's occupation is gone.

Surlingham Broad is one of the chief spawning-grounds of roach and bream, but the fish do not spawn here in such numbers as they did formerly. Mr. Davies states that some years ago the Broad, for a few days in spring, presented an interesting sight. The bream and roach would swarm up into the Broad in such vast numbers that the water was 'a moving mass of fish, so that it seemed as if a boat could hardly be rowed among them. On a fine hot day the backs of the huge bream could be seen breaking the surface in every direction; and in the stillness of the night the splashings and suckings and





MARSH HAY CARTING ON THE YARE



allowings, the shakings of the reeds as the monsters rolled through them, and the cries and twitterings of the reed sparrows, were striking in the extreme.' On a moonlight night a man remarked that the Broad 'reminded him of a Stilton cheese all alive with maggots'—an observation which, as Mr. Davies says, proves that the man was not the possessor of poetical temperament. The Rev. Richard Lubbock also noticed the great shoals of bream and roach which visited this favourite spawning-ground, and remarked that almost every instant small roach were raised half out of the water by the passage of larger ones.

There was a wild-fowl decoy at Brundall, but as I shall have occasion to deal with decoying in a later chapter I will only say here that Surlingham is no longer frequented by such large flocks of fowl in winter as it used to be. Snipe, it is true, are often fairly plentiful; but the hammering which goes on at the boat-builders' yards at Brundall is said to drive away the fowl that settle on the Surlingham pools. The warblers, however, have less reason to fear the presence of man, and in late spring, summer, and early autumn the reed-beds are full of them. Little grebes, too, have not wholly forsaken the Broad; in frosty weather they are often seen on the open water. But the flocks of fowl which the Breydoners put to flight when they began firing their punt-guns in the early morning more often made for Rockland than Surlingham, though even there, in that wild waste of reeds and water, they found no sanctuary. The Rockland gunners knew when and where to expect them, and, except during the close season, invariably gave them a warm reception.

A little way below Surlingham Broad, on the same side of the river, is Coldham Hall. This is a very popular inn with anglers, whose other resorts on the Yare are the Yare Hotel at Brundall, the Ferry Inn at Buckenham, the Red House at Cantley, and the Ferry Inn at Reedham, at each of which boats can be hired for a day's fishing. Fishermen, however, often complain that during the holiday season there are too many yachts and launches about to permit of good sport. For my own part, some of my most interesting memories of this neighbourhood are of 'Scientific' Fuller, one of the few men

who managed to gain a livelihood much after the fashion of the old-time Broadsmen.

I once visited Fuller on a January morning when the dykes were frozen. When I started along the ferry path from Brundall a fog hung over the marshes, but it was not dense enough to hide the willows and alders beside the footpath though it magnified some fieldfares till they looked almost as big as wood pigeons. The smooth, steely surface of the river reflected its fringing reeds, withered willow-herbs, and slender sallow wands with the faithfulness of a brightly burnished mirror. From a distant reed-bed the call-notes of some bearded titmice came like the clashing of fairy cymbals across the water ; from the misty marshes came the plaintive wailing of peewits and harsh cries of startled fieldfares. At the clanging of the Coldham ferry-bell a flock of starlings rose with a loud whirring of wings ; but a little black-capped reed-bunting, which the sharp weather had not yet driven from the riverside to the farmyards, darted to and fro undisturbed among the brittle, bladeless culms.

The chief and only really navigable waterway to Rockland Broad is a dyke about a mile and a half below Coldham Hall ; but on that January morning I walked from the inn to the Broad. The road from the river soon became a narrow field path, bordered by copses which seemed full of birds. Half an hour's strolling brought me to Rockland village, an isolated hamlet with a small staithe at which the wherries moor, and a narrow channel connecting it with the Broad. With its swampy osier grounds, yellow reed-stacks, and thatched cottages, it is a typical Broadland hamlet, and the majority of its few inhabitants were more or less dependent on the Broad for a livelihood.

A man who is an excellent shot and expert fisherman cannot live any great length of time near one of the Broads or rivers without attaining something of a reputation, so it is not surprising that Fuller, who possessed both these qualities, and had spent about fifty years on and around Rockland Broad, was well known to Broadland gunners and anglers. Like most men of his type, he was more at home afloat than ashore ; and though his cottage stood within a stone's throw of the Broad,

he spent most of his time in his 'gun-boat'. In winter he was abroad and afloat each morning before the first gleam of dawn tinged the eastern sky, so that sunrise found him crouched in the shelter of some reed-bed, on the alert for mallard or widgeon. During the day he might be seen laying out his 'liggers' or trimmers—a mode of fishing not then illegal at Rockland—or rowing silently up and down the dykes which connect the Broad with the river, his gun beside him, ready to bring down anything from a snipe to a wild goose or swan. In the evening, when the mist begins to drift like smoke across the water, and alders and sallows assume spectral shapes in the gathering gloom, he was abroad again, on the watch for flighting fowl. Biting blast nor nipping frost, drenching rain nor whirling snow-squall, would drive him to seek the shelter of his home if there was a likelihood of an open-air vigil being rewarded: the lee side of a reed shoal or sallow carr was all the shelter the flight-shooter needed.

Fuller appeared from behind a reed-stack just as I was knocking at his cottage door, and in a few minutes we were afloat in his gun-punt. In the dyke leading from the cottage to the Broad there was open water; but the Broad, in spite of two days' thaw, was partially covered with ice, through which Fuller had broken a channel for his boat early that morning. Here and there, however, there were open pools where the swans from the river were searching for succulent water-weeds. Over these pools we passed quickly and quietly; but for the most part ours was a rather curious progress, made by pulling the boat along with a boat-hook, or scraping our oars on the ice. Yet even this was not so strange as a method Fuller adopted when the Broad was wholly 'laid' and hard frozen; for then he fixed runners on to the bottom of his punt, hoisted the sail, and glided over the ice as though he were in an ice-yacht. Speaking of this reminded him of a winter when the Broad was frozen for several weeks. Then a number of skaters disported themselves on the frozen shallows where the swans were now feeding, and one of them, seeing Fuller skating with his gun under his arm, challenged him to shoot, while skating at full speed, a puit (black-headed gull) which was wheeling over the Broad. Fuller, like most of the Broadsmen, despised



the wanton 'gull-plugger'; but on this occasion, feeling his reputation to a certain extent at stake, he accepted the challenge. Holding his gun in both hands, he waited until the gull wheeled above him. He then skated after it, soon abandoning his usual stroke for that rapid run on skates which the Broadsmen resorts to when he wishes to attain a considerable speed. Then his gun went quickly to his shoulder, and a moment or two later the gull dropped almost at his feet.

But gulls are 'no-account' birds from the Broadsmen's point of view, and Fuller's reputation rests on far more precious spoils. He had shot quite a score of bitterns, several spoonbills, goosanders, smews, and not a few of the rarer kinds of duck. With a swivel-gun which he occasionally used in his little slate-coloured punt, he had made big bags of fowl; his boat, filled to overflowing with a morning's spoils, was made the subject of a picture called 'The Wildfowler', the work of a well-known Broadland artist. Well acquainted with the habits of the wild-fowl which frequent the Broads and marshes, he knew that, with a favouring wind, the fowl alarmed by the Breydoners would, about twenty minutes after the reports of the Breydon guns reached him, arrive at Rockland, which is distant from Breydon six or seven miles 'as the crow flies'. So, when he heard the big punt-guns booming on the estuary, he was soon afloat in his punt and rowing into the cover of the Rockland reeds. But he did not often use his heavy swivel-gun, for when fowl were plentiful there were other gunners besides himself on the Broad, which, unlike Breydon, is not large enough to permit the use of such guns with safety.

Two or three snipe were flushed from the swampy ground bordering the Broad; from a 'wall' on which a marshman had heaped a mound of dyke dredgings several hooded crows took wing. When we landed we found that the crows had been feeding on large, brown fresh-water mussels and a dead gull. But we were in no hurry to land. On the misty Broad we could, in spite of the ice, move silently, and so were able to approach within a few yards of a swimming grebe without alarming it. Not a breath of wind was stirring; the amber reeds and bleaching gladden were motionless; a suspensive stillness brooded around us. When a coot moved among the



'SCIENTIFIC' SPOTS FOWL



sedge, it seemed startled by the sound of its own movements, and became motionless again ; even the voles in the hovers appeared influenced by the atmospheric lethargy, for when an oar suddenly creaked in its rowlock a couple of them dived ' flop ' into the water within a yard or two of our boat. The withered reeds, rushes, and sedges, star-topped angelicas, and towering brown burdocks each had a reflected counterpart in the creeks which were free of ice ; a rugged alder, on which a flock of starlings settled, was as clearly outlined in the pale blue water as against the pale blue sky.

Although most of the marsh dykes were frozen, Big Sallow Dyke and Rockland Fleet, two of the channels leading from the Broad to the river, were navigable, the rise and fall of the tides having kept them open. While we rowed up the Fleet, which is the main channel used by the wherries bound for Rockland Staithe, my companion fell into a reminiscent mood. So long had been his acquaintance with the Broad, that almost every reed and gladden bed, sallow carr, creek, and dyke, reminded him of some gunning experience. In one reed jungle he had shot a bittern ; near a certain sallow bush a big dog otter, with whose traces, in the shape of half-eaten bream, he had long been familiar, had made its last meal ; here, a spoon-bill, driven from the Breydon flats, had met with the fate from which it had fled ; there, he had stood in his boat all one morning, bringing down duck almost as fast as he could load his gun. Some of his recollections were gruesome, notably those of a trip taken with two companions, one of whom, in raising his gun to aim at a heron, had shot the other dead. That, and one or two similar occurrences, had made Fuller very careful how and where he put his gun down in his boat. Once he had been caught in such a blinding snow-squall that he could not find his way across the Broad, and had to land and trudge across the marshes to his home.

But not one in every hundred visitors in Broadland sees Rockland in winter, when the alders are white with rime and ice-crystals tinkle among the reeds. The aspect most familiar to cruisers is its summer one, when the reeds are already several feet high, the sedges have shaken off their pollen-dusted anthers, and swallows and swifts are insect-hawking over shore

and water. Then there is much to tempt one to row up the Fleet, for the banks between which one's boat glides are like gardens of wild flowers. Purple spikes of loosestrife, tall willow-herbs, towering cat valerians, and creamy clusters of meadow-sweet almost hide the snipe-haunted swamps which lie beyond them ; and when the Broad is reached, such a scene is presented as gives one a fair idea of a Fenland mere in the pre-reclamation days. On almost every side the water is bordered by reeds, whose sibilant song—a whispered welcome to the summer breeze, soothing as the voice of a wind-swept cornfield—goes on unceasingly. Beyond the reeds the land for the most part is low ; even Rockland village, which is close by the waterside, is scarcely seen until the channel is entered which leads up to the staithe ; so the charm of the Broad is of that subtle kind which appeals to the ear rather than the eye. The rustling reeds, the hum of insect life among the swamp flowers, the ' splash ' of leaping fish, the bleating of snipe, and the ' slap ' of the water against one's boat's side, combine to create this charm, which grows upon one rather than wanes through familiarity. And in the opinion of many people Rockland has an advantage over some of the more popular Broad, in that its being unnavigable to the larger kinds of river craft prevents its ever being so alive with humanity as are Wroxham and Oulton during the greater part of the cruising season. Its low, swampy shores, too, help it to retain its primitive aspect, and there are no neighbouring heights on which villas can be built to overlook its peaceful waters.

As it is with the Broad, so it is with the inhabitants of the village of Rockland. On a June day, when the green gladden was waving its long leaves, and the Broad was so covered with the white flowers of the water-crowfoot that it seemed to be ice-laid and covered with a thin coating of snow, I chatted with the rector of the parish about his parishioners, and learnt much that was interesting and surprising. He assured me that even then there were men and women in Rockland and its neighbourhood who sought the aid of ' wise women ' and ' cunning men ' when a child was lost ; who would not allow their relatives to be buried on the north side of the church ; and who could not be brought to reject the idea that it was unlucky to



disturb the swallows which nested in the church roof. There were old people living in the village who could remember the strange circumstances which attended the burial of a reputed witch. As the hour fixed for the interment approached, a storm arose, which so increased in fury that at the time when the coffin was being borne to the church, and from the church to the grave, the bearers could scarcely keep their feet. So long as the witch's body was above ground the storm continued to rage ; but the moment the coffin was lowered into the grave the storm ceased, ' and there was a great calm '. When, some years ago, Dr. Jessopp related his experiences among the dwellers in his delightful Arcady, and affirmed that a belief in witchcraft survived among them, there were persons who could scarcely credit his assertion. For the superstitious folk who still cherish strange old beliefs and resort to primitive means of divination are chary of speaking of such things ; you may live for years among them and know little of what is going on around you. But now and again some chance remark, curious action, or inquiry into the origin of a rustic's nickname, gives you a glimpse of what lies behind a mask of taciturnity, and by patient and careful investigation you may discover how tenacious is the hold superstition has on the dwellers in out-of-the-way hamlets of Broadland.

Cruisers on the Yare and other main rivers of Broadland cannot help noticing the narrow channels or dykes which lead up to the village staithes. Some of these channels are not wide enough to allow of two wherries passing each other, and are so shallow that only small rowing and sailing boats and wherries can ascend them. Yet it is by way of these dykes that the farmers whose lands lie along the borders of the marshes send away large quantities of their corn, and receive cargoes of coal for their homes and oilcake for their stock. For centuries these dykes, which, unlike the ordinary marsh and mill dykes, are ' walled ' like the main rivers, have been the waterways to isolated hamlets, whose inhabitants, until a comparatively recent date, knew little of what was happening even in towns so near as Yarmouth and Norwich except what they learnt from the wherry-men. They were, and some of them still are, the tentacular arms by which the river gets in touch with

out-of-the-way places ; like the branch lines of the great railways, they bring remote places in touch with the centres of commerce.

One of these channels, Langley Dyke, branches off from the Yare about two and a half miles below Rockland Broad. It is bordered on one side by marshes, on the other by a small plantation of alders, poplars, and birches ; and it is worth ascending (in a small boat) because it leads to the ruins of Langley Abbey. These ruins are not very interesting at first glance, but a close examination reveals that they are not so fragmentary as to be entirely uninteresting. Like several other monastic houses in Norfolk, this abbey now forms part of some farm buildings ; but while many may object to its being turned to such usage, it cannot be denied that in this instance it has resulted in the preservation of interesting work which otherwise would have vanished or fallen into decay. As it is, some of the old doorways retain their original form and mouldings. A gloomy crypt, a spiral staircase, and some good arches remain almost intact ; and enough of the walls is left standing to enable the antiquary to reconstruct for himself the greater part of this ancient Premonstratensian house.

The history of the abbey is unexciting. It was founded in 1198 by Sir Robert Fitz-Roger Helke, who assumed the name of De Clavering from his lordship of Clavering in Essex. He was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk during the third and fourth years of the reign of Richard I, and was a wealthy man who endowed the abbey with the greater part of the revenue of his estates. The first abbot and fifteen canons, for whom there was accommodation here, came from Alnwick Priory, in Northumberland, and Langley was called a ' daughter of Alnwick ' for that reason. Its church was a favourite burying-place with Norfolk knights and their dames, the names of some sixty of whom are given by a Norfolk historian, who concludes his list with the remark, ' Good heavens ! what a number of noble personages are here deposited—in hopes of a joyful resurrection.' That the monastery was a rich one is shown by the same historian, who proves that it possessed nineteen Norfolk manors and land in several towns in Norfolk and Suffolk. The benefactors of the abbey were so numerous, he adds, that it ' would fully employ the clergy of that day

to remember [them] in their prayers'. The abbey grounds extended down to the riverside, and if the river was as full of roach and bream then as it is to-day, there was plenty of fish for the refectory on fast days. No doubt the Langley monks had 'big-fish' stories to tell to, and notes to compare with, their Augustinian neighbours at Herringfleet, when they rowed down to Reedham, crossed the marshes, and were ferried over the Waveney by Sireck, who kept the Herringfleet ferry. Maybe, too, they were able to catch herrings occasionally, for the herring shoals, we are told, came up the rivers a long time after the abbey was founded, and the herring fisheries were a source of considerable income to dwellers among the marshes. Fowl, too, were plentiful, and Rockland and Surlingham fowlers would often, with shoulders bent under a burden of teal and mallard, find their way to the abbey gate. They were fortunate monks who dwelt beside the waterways of Broadland.

Langley Abbey is not a 'show place'. When I visited it on a bright and breezy May day I reckoned myself favoured in encountering among the ruins a charming young guide, who seemed, as no doubt she was, as much at home among them as though she had known the abbey in its prime. She it was who pointed out to me an old stone coffin which may have been that of one of those noble personages who were buried in the abbey church, and it was from her that I heard of other discoveries made within and around the crumbling walls. I remember our discussing the possibility of that old salad herb, Good King Henry (*Chenopodium Bonus-Henricus*), which grows freely among the ruins, having been introduced there by the Premonstratensians; but I forget—perhaps because my attention was too much taken up with a bright red tam-o'-shanter—what conclusion we arrived at. But I know we stood before a fine old medlar tree, which may have furnished fruit for an abbot's dessert, and that all around us were fruit trees in the full beauty of bloom; and I know how the whole mystery of life and death became more complex to me when I saw youth and beauty treading lightfoot over the dust of long-dead knights and dames. And when, as the sun was sinking beyond the border of the marshes, I bade farewell to Langley's ruined shrine and made my way back to the river, a red tam-o'-shanter

and a pair of laughing eyes came between me and my visions of the monks of old.

About two miles below Buckenham Ferry—where, on account of the number of anglers who come to share in the good roach-fishing to be had in this part of the Yare, a new inn has arisen on the site of the old one so well remembered by some cruisers on the river—is Hardley Cross, where the little river Chet branches off south-westward. This stream is generally described as navigable up to Loddon; but even small yachts often have difficulty in reaching the pleasantly situated little town, and the last time I made the voyage I found four wherries ‘hung up’, as the wherry-men call it, one near the mouth of the river, the others a short distance below Loddon Staithe. But my little gun-punt, which, according to the Broadsmen, is a craft which can be sailed or rowed wherever there has been a heavy dew, met with no more discouraging obstacle than an occasional patch of clinging water-weeds; and it is in such a boat, or in an ordinary rowing boat, that the Chet should be navigated. And although there is little in the river or along its banks, where the scenery is simply pastoral, to arouse enthusiasm, I would encourage every one who can do so to make the voyage; for Loddon is, to my mind, a very charming little place, and a saunter through it, a game of bowls on the old green at the back of the Swan Inn, a glance at some of the pictures the inn contains, a visit to the church, and then to Chedgrave Church or the quaint old-world hamlet and Hall on Hales Green, are a sufficient recompense for any difficulties which may be encountered on the river.

Concerning Hardley Cross and its significance I have written in an earlier chapter; but before saying something more about Loddon and its neighbourhood, I would like to mention some curious information which the Rev. W. Hudson gave in a paper read to the members of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society when they made a voyage down the Yare and visited Langley Abbey. He said that it was not known when a cross was first erected at the junction of the Yare and Chet, but he had discovered that a new one was put up in the year 1543. It was made, he said, of timber, and a carpenter was paid 3s. 4d. for making it. A certain Nicholas Maryes then devoted eight









days to ornamenting it with a crucifix and the arms of the City of Norwich, also with a finial and other 'antikke' work, for which he was paid 4s. 4d. Another artificer then received 2s. 8½d. for cleaning the embossed work ; after which a certain Tuttel made a frame to set into the ground, into which frame the cross was to be mortised. It was then oiled and varnished for 1s. 4d., and some 'spekyngs' were made for the feet and hands of the crucifix, and perhaps for affixing the city arms. The 'spekyngs' cost 1d. each. Then a boat was hired, and two rowers conveyed the cross, with two carpenters and two labourers, to Hardley, to which place the chamberlain and sheriffs of Norwich rode on horseback to see the cross set up. This cost 3s. 6d. The only other expenses were 2d. for rowing the chamberlain from the village to the mouth of the Chet, and 6d. for a firkin of beer for the carpenters and labourers ; so that the total cost of the cross erected in 1543 was 19s. 0½d. The existing cross is a stone one. It appears to have been erected in the seventeenth century, and has been restored several times by certain mayors of Norwich, whose names are on it.

Some idea of Loddon may be gathered from the fact that it is a little country town about four miles from the nearest railway station. How it is that no tentacular branch line has yet extended itself in this direction I cannot say ; but nowadays a motor-bus service provides its inhabitants with means of locomotion. The town is little more than a village, where the restful quietude of the average village is intensified. Business seems to be practised during the day as a preliminary pastime to that resorted to every evening on the 'Swan' bowling-green, where the tradesmen meet in friendly rivalry so long as daylight lasts. The church, said to have been built by Sir James Hobart, attorney-general to Henry VII, stands in a good open position, and is noted for its fine but mutilated font. It also contains some interesting screen panels, a curious old iron-bound alms-box, one or two good tombs, and an old painting in which are represented the church and an imposing bridge which formerly spanned the Waveney at St. Olave's. From an archaeological point of view, however, the church at Chedgrave, or Chetgrave, about five minutes' walk from the

water-mill, on the opposite side of the river, is more interesting, for it possesses two very fine Norman doorways, one elaborately ornamented, and some good stained glass brought from Rouen Cathedral at the time of the Revolution of 1797. This church, which is a very quaint little building, has picturesque surroundings, and the view from the churchyard is a charming one.

A pleasant stroll is that from Loddon to Hales Green, a little hamlet reached by way of the Beccles road and a by-road branching off to the right, a distance of a little more than two miles. It is a stroll worth taking, not only on account of the picturesque Green with its scattered cottages and farmsteads, but because it brings the rambler to Hales Old Hall, the old home of that Attorney-General Hobart who built Loddon Church. The Green is a little bit of rural England of the past—of England as it was in the days of the highwaymen, of stage-coaches and romance of the road, of almost impassable by-roads, and of rural isolation. The by-road, when it reaches it, comes to an end except in so far as it is continued by a rough wagon track leading to one or two of the bordering farmsteads. I walked down this road on a June day, and found the hedges around the Green, and the thickets beside the ponds on the Green, garlanded with wild roses and exhaling the strong scent of flowering elders. On every side of the Green, but not so numerous as to break appreciably the continuity of its leafy bounds, were clusters of old cottages, unaltered in outward aspect since the day when the dwellers in them played camping matches and danced about the Maypole on the expanse of common land which lay before their doors. I fancied that if the attorney-general who once lived in the ruined Hall at the top of the Green could revisit his old home he would find little had changed in the manor of which he was lord; and while trying, with the aid of my recollections of the rude portrait of him in Loddon Church, to picture him to myself, I stood before his crumbling Hall. It was not a place where one could 'walk alone a banquet-hall deserted', and see portraits of the knights and dames who long ago feasted and pledged each other there, for the remaining portion of the house was still tenanted, and its interior had been altered to suit the convenience of its occupiers, with the result that little or nothing was left of the

decorative work which once adorned it ; but the old gateway remained intact, and here and there were traces of the foundations of what must once have been a stately home. On the banks of the moat were masses of crumbling masonry, and a portion of one of the courtyard walls was still standing ; so, too, was the Hobarts' old barn, one of the largest in the county. But the dwellers in the Old Hall knew nothing of its history. All the information I gained from them was that it was a ' perishin' ' place in which to live in winter, when deep snow-drifts were heaped up on the Green and icy blasts rattled the crazy casements of the rooms in which the Hobarts lived and died.

From Hardley Cross it is only about half a mile to Reedham Ferry, and a mile and a half to the waterside village of Reedham. Here the Danish chieftain Lodbrog is said to have landed when he was storm-driven in a small boat across the North Sea. According to the monkish chroniclers, Lodbrog was out hawking one day along the coast of his native land when his hawk, in striking down at some water-fowl, fell into the sea. Hoping to save the bird's life, he launched a boat and went to its rescue. Before he could return to shore a storm arose and carried him out to sea. After tossing helplessly about for several days, his boat was driven into the mouth of the great eastern estuary, and he landed at Reedham and was taken to the court of Edmund, King of the East Angles. Apparently the king was much impressed by his involuntary visitor, for he not only allowed him to remain at his court, but showed him such marked favour as excited the jealousy of Bern, his chief huntsman. Bern's jealousy increased when he found that Lodbrog excelled him in all field-sports ; and one day, when they were out hunting together in a wood, he slew his rival and concealed his body in a thicket. The behaviour of Lodbrog's dog led to the discovery of the body, and Bern, whose guilt was proved, was sent adrift in the boat which had borne the Dane across the sea to England. As the story goes, the boat was again driven across the North Sea, and Bern landed in Denmark, where he told Inguar and Ubba, Lodbrog's sons, that King Edmund had slain their father. On hearing this the sons vowed to avenge Lodbrog's death, and during

several years they made a series of raids on Eastern England, captured Edmund, and, tying him to a tree, had him shot to death by Danish bowmen.

The story of Lodbrog is probably legendary. Even if it has a groundwork of fact, the monkish chroniclers have undoubtedly invented a good deal that is marvellous in it to add to the fame of the canonized Edmund. Yet, as a Norfolk geologist pointed out nearly eighty years ago, the objections to it based upon the difficulty in reconciling its main incident with the present topography of the district are without weight if we accept the statement of geologists, that at the time of Lodbrog's adventures the Broadland valleys formed an arm of the sea. It has been gravely argued that it is impossible a boat should have been driven several miles up a narrow river before its occupant could effect a landing; but, as Mr. Robberds in his *Observations on the Eastern Valleys* remarks, there is 'nothing very surprising or impossible in what befel this Dane, if we consider that the whole level of marshes and meadows, from the present coast up to Norwich, was at that time covered by the waters of the ocean. A vessel driven by a north-east wind into the entrance of this arm of the sea, near Caister, would be taken, equally by the direction of the gale and the current of the tide, in a straight course towards that point where Reedham now stands.' And he adds further that, admitting the story to be entirely fabulous, the author of it would not have selected Reedham as the spot on which to land his shipwrecked hero 'if from the form of the coast such an event had been as destitute of probability then as it would be at the present day'. Even a legendary tale, he urges, must not be entirely at variance with physical conditions.

There is very little for the voyager to see at Reedham unless he be interested in bird life, in which case it is worth his while to visit the heronry in a carr not far from the church. The entrance to the New Cut, which connects the Yare with the Waveney, is seen just below the railway bridge. It provides a channel by which wherries and yachts can reach Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Beccles, and Bungay without having to go round by Breydon and enter the Waveney there. Below the village the Yare flows between wide marshlands dotted with windmills





ROOKS MOBBING A HERON



and, in summer, with cattle ; where the only human habitations are those of the cattle-tenders and marshmen ; where the heron fishes undisturbed for hours together, and a man may wander all day and hear no voices except those of sedge-warblers, larks, and meadow pipits. Now and again a yellow wagtail is seen making a ' dipping ' flight along the dykesides, a heron utters its harsh ' frank ' as it flies heavily over marsh and river to the Breydon flats or its colony in the Reedham woods, or the strange, laughing cry of a black-headed gull breaks the brooding silence ; but save for the wild-life voices there is little for the voyager to note until he reaches Breydon, unless—as may be the case after a day's cruise down the Yare—he should happen to reach these lower waters just at the time when the sun is sinking beyond the far-off level horizon. Then it is not unlikely that he may witness one of those Broadland sunsets which are not only gorgeous but awe-inspiring and indescribable. And he will sail across Breydon, or moor for the night at Berney Arms or Burgh, conscious of having seen a spectacle than which Nature can show nothing more sublime or more calculated to make a lasting impression.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE WAVENEY, FRITTON LAKE, AND OULTON BROAD

THE Waveney, although there is connected with it one of the twelve Broads each having an area of over a hundred acres, will never be so popular with pleasure-seekers as the Yare and Bure, for the scenery of its navigable waters cannot compare with that of the other two main rivers of Broadland ; and though the places of interest adjoining it are rather more numerous than those of which the Yare can boast, the distances between them are considerably greater. While, however, the scenery between Breydon and Beccles is, for the most part, monotonously flat, it is possible, by landing at certain points and strolling a little way beyond the borders of the marshes, to discover villages, lanes, and woodlands almost, if not quite, as delightful as those adjoining the Bure and its tributary streams ; while above Beccles there are some pleasant but little-known reaches, and in the neighbourhood of Bungay there are spots where the scenery is almost equal to that of Constable's dearly-loved Vale of Dedham. If, however, in writing of this river, I evince an interest in and affection for places which to strangers appear to possess little to commend them, I, perhaps, may be forgiven ; for it was on the Waveney that I first felt the charm of Broadland life and scenery, and near its banks the greater part of my life has been spent. At a time when Wroxham, Hickling, and Rockland were only names to me, I knew many miles of the Waveney valley almost as well as I did the river reach seen from the windows of the house in which I was born ; long before I saw the reed-cutters at work at Oulton, or had even seen an eel-sett, I was at home among the haymakers in the Waveney water-meadows, and the men who, from strange and wonderful seaports, brought the wherries up to Bungay Staithe.

Assuming that a yachtsman starts from Yarmouth to explore the Waveney, he sees, as soon as he has crossed Breyton and entered on the lower waters of the river, the ruins of that fine old Roman stronghold, Burgh Castle. This great camp, undoubtedly the strongest in which the Romans established themselves in the district now known as Broadland, commanded the entrance to the two chief navigable waterways up which a hostile fleet might have attempted to win its way into the heart of East Anglia. Its construction has been attributed by some to the Roman general Publius Ostorius Scapula and by others to Carausius, and it is generally identified with the *Garianonum* of the *Notitia Imperii*. There can be little doubt that it is one of the great *castella*, or forts, erected by the Romans for coast defence, and which were under the command of an officer called the 'Count of the Saxon Shore'. *Garianonum* was the headquarters of a force known as the Stablesian Horse. Its massive walls—which, in spite of having served as quarries for early seekers of building material, are remarkably well preserved—enclose on three sides an oblong area measuring 640 feet by 370 feet. These walls are strengthened by solid rounded bastions, two of which, on the east side, flank the principal entrance. No west wall of similar construction seems to have been built, and was unnecessary owing to the position of the fort; but traces of what may have been a sea-wall or quay were discovered in 1850, when excavations were made for the purpose of finding traces of a west wall. No systematic work to find out the ground plan of the interior has ever been done; but there were probably important buildings within the walls and also outside them, where tiles and hollow hypocaust bricks have been dug up. Some time ago I was interested in finding one of these bricks on which the imprints of the maker's fingers were clearly impressed.

One can hardly envy the Roman soldiers whose lot it was to occupy and defend this bleak and isolated post. Newly come, maybe, from some *aestiva* overlooking the blue waters of the Mediterranean, this Burgh camp, exposed to the piercing sea-winds which swept untempered over the wide waste of the estuary, must have seemed to them a dreary spot, and often they must have longed to return to their native land. Pacing



at night outside the ramparts, or keeping watch from the top of the round towers at the angles of the camp, the sentries could scarcely help contrasting the shrill song of the wind among the reeds with its soft murmur among the long-familiar myrtle-groves ; the wild cries of the sea-birds and mazy dance of the marsh fires would be a sound and a sight of dread. Men who felt no fear when brave Icenic warriors flung themselves upon them fiercely, would feel a chill at their hearts when the wraith-like wreaths of mist drifted up from dismal Breydon. When the loud clangour of some fighting flock of unknown fowl came startlingly out of the night gloom, even the knowledge that death was the penalty of desertion would hardly keep them at their posts. But the commands of the *propraetors* must be obeyed, and many of the Roman horsemen not only spent long and dreary days in this isolated stronghold, but died here, and were buried in the little graveyard of which traces have been found just beyond the walls of the camp.

Even now Burgh is a lonesome spot, and its outlook over the wide marshes often somewhat dreary. A dark drapery of ivy enfolds the massive ramparts which have crowned the slope for nearly two thousand years ; looking upwards from the river, one sees nothing of the green or gold of the cornfields which lie beyond the slowly crumbling walls. At night the strange churring of the nightjar is often heard from the gloom of the grove which hides the church ; the piping and wailing of the Breydon fowl sound as weird to-day to belated cruisers as they did to the Roman soldiers whose dust is disturbed by the farmer's plough. On still autumn nights the falling of leaves can be heard distinctly, and wisps of the fog which, like a fleecy pall, covers the wide marshlands, drift up the slope and through the gateway of the camp, distilling rain-like drops of moisture on the stubble of the neighbouring fields. But on a bright summer day the view from the camp is not unpleasing. For miles the courses of the rivers can be traced by their bordering windmills, which, with the dark-sailed wherries, white-winged yachts, and countless cattle on the marshes, help to make such a scene as is to be found nowhere else in England. From the top of Burgh church tower many churches can be seen, and on a clear day, and with a good glass, the spire of



BREYDON — LOW WATER



Norwich Cathedral. So, after all, there were some grounds for Bede's assertion that 'by reason of woods and seas together' Burgh was 'a most pleasant castle', and not an unfitting site for that small monastery which the Irish monk Furseus, brought here by Sigebert, King of the East Angles, is said to have built in the midst of the Roman camp.

The four or five miles of river between Burgh Castle and St. Olave's Bridge call for no description. They are bordered by marshes like those through which the Yare flows between Reedham and Breydon, and only botanists in search of marsh orchids, rare sedges, and other plants which 'partake the nature of their fenny bed', care to land and explore the levels lying beyond the river walls. But a mile or so below the bridge, near an old windmill and a marsh cottage occupied by the millman, I often leave the river for a while and ramble across a stretch of heathland bordering the green road from Belton to Herringfleet. There, where adders sometimes lurk amid the tall, waving bracken, pretty little sand-lizards bask on the footpaths, and that curious amphibian, the natterjack, or running toad, may be seen running like a mouse among the heath and ling, the Rambler seldom hears other voices than those of wailing peewits, bleating snipes, and the whinchats, which utter strange call-notes from the tops of the gorse and bramble bushes. Beyond the heath, along the borders of the green road—which, in spite of the neighbouring railway, is in spring and summer the haunt of innumerable sweet-singing birds—the dainty burnet rose decks the hedge-rows, and the air is fragrant with sweetbriar. Turning to the right when this road is reached, it is not far to that which leads directly from the river to Fritton Lake, the loveliest of all inland waters of Broadland.

Fritton Lake is not a Broad as the term is understood in Norfolk, where it means the 'broadening out' of a river, but is a land-locked lake almost wholly surrounded by woodlands. In the days when the entire level of the Broadland valleys was an arm of the sea, Fritton formed part of that large estuary; but the lowlands between the lake and river are now, for the most part, reclaimed, and only a narrow un-navigable dyke represents the channel through which the

sea tides ebb and flowed. Around Fritton Lake there are none of those swampy lands such as border Rockland, Barton, and Hickling, and the depth of water in the lake is far greater than that of the real Broad. Scanty fringes of reeds there are here and there, and the sedge-warblers visit them as regularly as they do those around the Broad; but elsewhere the gnarled boughs of woodland trees overhang the water, and the nightingale's song and the woodpecker's laugh are as familiar here as the *chitty, chitty, cha, cha* of the little brown bird of the reeds. Pheasants are as abundant in the Fritton woods as are wild-fowl in sharp weather on the Fritton waters; woodland and waterside wild flowers here bloom side by side. And all the varied green of oak and birch, larch and fir, goes to the making of a sylvan setting for a mirror which reflects the ever-changing aspects of shore and sky.

To pleasure-seekers the waters of Fritton Lake are accessible only during the summer months; in winter they are strictly preserved, on account of the wild fowl which flock to them and are lured into the Fritton decoys. As you row round the lake you can see the arch-shaped entrances to the tunnel-like decoys which are still used when the fowl come southward; but to gain any real knowledge of this curious method of wild-fowl capture you must accompany a decoyman when he goes down to the waterside to work his 'pipes'. To gain permission to do this is no easy matter, for, as the Rev. Richard Lubbock says, '*Procul, O procul este profani*,' is the cry of most of the men who own or have charge of decoys; yet there are means of persuasion—they will readily suggest themselves—which some of the decoymen cannot resist. That there are such men at Fritton I will not affirm, for the Fritton decoys are the property of the owners of the lake and woods, who work them for 'sport' rather than profit. I will only say that decoying is no longer so mysterious a business as it used to be.

At the beginning of the last century there were a score or more places in Norfolk and Suffolk where wild-fowl decoying was carried on every winter; in Broadland alone there were, not so very long ago, decoys at Winterton, Waxham, Ranworth, Mautby, Acle, Woodbastwick, Hemsby, and Flixton,



as well as at Fritton. Nearly all these decoys are now, for some reason or other, fallen into disuse, and it is at Fritton only that they are worked regularly on favourable occasions. To make clear the worker's methods, it is necessary first to describe a decoy pipe. It consists of a semicircular tunnel of wire netting and network arched over a shallow dyke which curves inland from the shores of a Broad, lake, or pool. This network tunnel is the ' pipe '. It is usually about twenty feet wide at the mouth, narrows as it curves inland, and is about a hundred yards long. It terminates in a long bow-net not unlike the ' pot ' or ' pod ' of an eel-sett, which can be disconnected from the rest of the pipe when the fowl have been driven into it. Along both sides of the pipe reed screens are erected obliquely ; behind these the decoyman conceals himself, and, through small peep-holes, made by turning thin strips of wood sideways between the reeds, scans the open water in front of the pipe, and watches the progress of the decoying. The fowl are lured by means of tame decoy ducks and a trained dog known as the ' piper '. The decoy ducks, which are usually birds whose plumage closely resembles that of the wild ducks, are trained by judicious feeding to answer to the low whistle the decoyman gives when he wishes them to enter the pipe. Sometimes it is unnecessary to whistle, the appearance of the piper, which, at a signal from his master, leaps over the low boards called dog-jumps, placed between the screens, being sufficient to attract them to the pipe.

What strikes the stranger as the most wonderful feature of decoying is the curiosity displayed by the wild-fowl at the appearance of the decoyman's dog. Instead of taking flight as soon as it commences to leap to and fro over the ' jumps ', the fowl at once evince great interest in its movements ; and when the tame ducks, beside which they have been feeding on the pool, begin swimming towards the mouth of the pipe they follow them. As soon as they are well within the pipe, the decoyman, who until then has kept himself carefully concealed, and perhaps has carried in his hand a piece of smouldering peat so that the keen-scented fowl may not become aware of his presence, shows himself in front of the screens, but behind the fowl, and by waving

his arm or handkerchief frightens them so that they rise from the water and fly swiftly up the narrowing pipe. He follows them and drives them into the bow-net, which he promptly disconnects from the rest of the pipe, and the fowl are caught. He then takes them out one by one and wrings their necks. When wild duck, widgeon, and teal are plentiful immense quantities of them are taken in this way. The Rev. R. Lubbock knew of 300 mallard being taken in one morning, also 220 teal. The average 'take' of a decoy at the present time is said to be about a 1,000 fowl in a season; but this can scarcely apply to Broadland, though 1,400 fowl were I believe, taken at Fritton in one week during the winter of 1899-1900. The difficulty in preserving that absolute quietude essential to the successful working of a decoy is one of the chief reasons why so many of the old pipes have fallen into disuse; and it is only at Fritton, where the land surrounding the lake belongs to the owners of the decoys, and fishing, shooting, and boating are prohibited during the winter months, that this old-time method of wild-fowl capture can still be resorted to with any likelihood of success.

From the time when the larches and birches first fleck the woods with a green spray, until the golden and brown leaves spread a rustling carpet on the woodland paths, Fritton is the loveliest lagoon in Broadland; but even when one has rowed from shore to shore, seen the sunlit waters gleaming between the boles of birch, oak, and beech, wandered through groves where the paths seem a flickering fretwork of sunlight and leaf shadows, inhaled the fragrance of the old-fashioned flowers in the Old Hall garden, and listened to the drowsy droning of the bees among the blossoms, one can have only a faint idea of the charm Fritton has for those who have known it long and known it well. The cruiser on Broadland waterways can seldom spare the time necessary to become acquainted with all its beauties; he can only imagine what the lake is like when its bordering woods are white and gleaming with hoar-frost, and every breath of breeze sets ice-crystals tinkling among the reeds. This is an aspect of Fritton with which only a favoured few are familiar, but a decoyman will tell you that there are times when, in the excitement of watching the



MOVING TO THEIR DOOM

Frank. Atterbury, Jr.



wild-fowl paddling up the pipe of his decoy, he can feel neither the nip of the frost at his finger-tips nor the chill which is creeping into his bones. And if you ask him, he will say that it is in winter; and in frosty weather, that Fritton is seen at its best; for the sight of the wild-fowl swarming on the lake is far more pleasant to him than the singing of nightingales and reed-birds and the shimmering of green leaves in the sunlight.

Of the Augustinian Priory of St. Olave, which stood near the ferry which crossed the river where St. Olave's Bridge now stands, there are only scanty remains, and these are of little interest; but if the voyager, after seeing Fritton, have an hour or two to spare before resuming his cruise, he may like to traverse the long, willow-fringed dam which leads to Haddiscoe and visit Haddiscoe Church, which has the finest Norman round tower in Norfolk. There he can decipher the curious epitaph to an old stage-coachman, carved on a stone affixed to the outside of the churchyard wall. But unless he be interested in church architecture it will hardly be worth his while to cross the dusty marsh dam; he had better board his boat again and continue his voyage to Oulton Broad. At Somerleyton he will pass under another railway bridge, near which he may land and stroll up to the model village of Somerleyton, grouped around a pleasant green; and if he be there on a day when the gardens of Somerleyton Hall are open to the public, he cannot do better than see them and the fine Hall, which stands on the site of the old seat of the 'Lords of the Island of Lothingland'. When Fuller, in the seventeenth century, visited 'Summerley Hall', he said that it was a place 'well answering the name thereof: for here Sommer is to be seen in the depth of Winter, in the pleasant walks beset on both sides with firr trees, green all the year long'. But the Hall to which Fuller refers, and which is said to have been built by a member of the Jerningham family, is demolished, and the present house, erected by Sir Morton Peto, has had no such exciting episodes in its history as had the old one, to which, we are told, on March 14th 1642, Colonel Cromwell's and Captain Fountayn's troops, and divers others, to the number of 140, came, and, in addition to commandeering a large quantity of corn, carried away with them a quantity of



arms and £160 in gold. For the Hall was then occupied by Sir John Wentworth, a Royalist, to whom the Lord General subsequently sent peremptory orders that he should 'ungarrison' the place or it would be demolished with its fortifications. But when the Commonwealth ended, and King Charles came to the throne, his coronation was celebrated by the Somerleyton folk in a very festive style ; for we read that barrels of beer, 'duzzens' of bread, 'tobacko', pipes, sugar, and 'pruens' were purchased for the entertainment of the villagers, and a large quantity of faggots, broom, and firwood was provided for the building of a 'bone fire'.

Between Somerleyton and Oulton there is little specially noteworthy that is not to be seen elsewhere along the river, consequently the cruiser may be glad to know that there is an overland route to Oulton, which, if he is not sailing his yacht himself, he can take, sending his yacht on to the Broad in charge of the men who sail her. Leaving the road to Somerleyton station on the right as he returns from the village, he soon finds himself in a pleasant leafy lane running along the crest of the uplands where they slope downwards to the marshes. For some distance this lane, which is bordered by rose-garlanded hedgerows, except where it becomes a footpath across a small furzy warren, keeps to the uplands ; but opposite the first cottage in the sparsely populated parish of Flixton there is a by-lane, or 'driftway', as it is locally called, leading down to the marshes. At the marsh end of this holly-bordered driftway there is, a little way to the right, a rush marsh where sundews, bog pimpernels, marsh helleborines, and the beautiful Grass of Parnassus grow freely, and even the dusky marsh cinquefoil, rare marsh pea, and marsh fern may be found ; but the Oulton path is to the left, along the border of the marshes. This path leads to a footbridge over a narrow streamlet draining Flixton Decoy, a small, strictly-preserved lake hidden by its surrounding woods. Crossing the footbridge, the path, which still keeps to the marshes, brings the traveller, by way of a short lane where the scent of honeysuckle is often overpowered by the disagreeable odour of white-starred ramsons, to a little hamlet called Fisher Row. This hamlet, which contains nothing of special interest, is soon left behind,

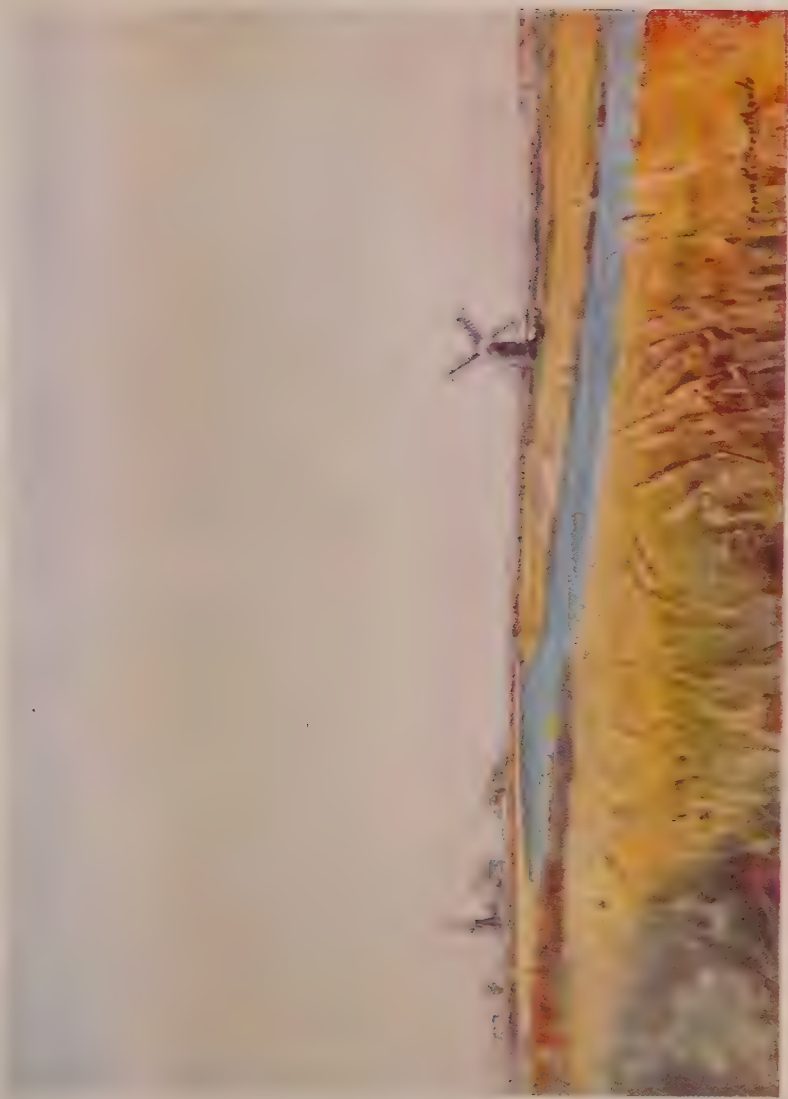
and the path, after passing by a small marsh farmstead, should be abandoned at the point where a driftway comes down to it near Oulton Church, which is seen on high ground to the left.

Another footpath, branching off from the driftway just opposite the churchyard gate, leads to a little colony of new houses overlooking the Broad. One of these houses stands on the site of George Borrow's Oulton home, and the summer-house in which Borrow wrote *Lavengro* and the *Bible in Spain*, and sometimes entertained his Romany friends, is still to be seen on the verge of a lawn, overshadowed by the firs among which he loved to hear the wind make mournful music. Apart from this old octagonal summer-house, which remains in much the same state as Borrow left it, there is little of interest in this particular neighbourhood; for the red-brick villas and castellated houses which have sprung up on this side of the Broad, with some huge and ugly malt-houses at its Carlton end, have robbed Oulton of the beauty it once possessed. Some fine old black poplars at the bend of the road connecting this unsightly modern settlement with Carlton Colville are, with the church and summer-house, all that would remind Borrow, could he revisit Oulton, of the scenes with which he was long familiar. The old tithe-barn, through whose tileless rafters the red light of sunset used to glow so gorgeously that the barn looked like some charred timber framework left by a receding conflagration, is gone; and the spot which in Borrow's day was so isolate that it was said to be more approachable by water than by land, is only too easily accessible. The smoke of the Romany's camp fire is no longer seen like a blue haze against the dusky background of firs; and, as Dr. Jessopp says of other places which were once parts of Arcady, the face of the land wears a smirk rather than a smile.

Not only is the tithe-barn gone, but the old Wherry Inn no longer stands near Mutford Bridge, its site being now occupied by a large modern hotel. Oulton Broad is now a place for water-frolics and regattas rather than communion with Nature. During the holiday season every train and motor-bus from Lowestoft discharges a crowd of pleasure-seekers on to the platforms of Oulton Broad North and South

stations ; and it is only before the Lowestoft season begins and after it ends that the Broad enjoys peace and quiet. For three months in the year its boat-yards are thronged with yachting parties starting on or returning from Broadland cruising. Usually a little fleet of yachts, launches, and pleasure-*wherries* is at anchor near *Mutford Bridge*. For *Oulton* is so near *Lowestoft* that many cruising parties do not trouble to take their yachts down the unattractive channel of *Lake Lothing* and moor them in the harbour yacht-basin ; they visit *Lowestoft* by road or rail, and return to the Broad at night. Recently some pleasure gardens have been laid out beside the Broad.

But although *Oulton* lacks such beauty as has made *Wroxham* and *Barton* famous, it is a fine sheet of water for sailing ; and when regattas are held on the Broad under favourable conditions some good racing is seen. The water is deep everywhere except near the shore, and by way of *Oulton Dyke*, which is also wide and deep enough to admit of the passage of the largest craft which navigate the Broadland waterways, a day's cruise can be pleasantly extended up or down the *Waveney*. A popular trip with local folk who cannot devote much time to boating is that to the little *staithe* near the curious church at *Burgh St. Peter* ; but very few of the cruisers who land at the *staithe* and visit the church know that the latter stands on or near the site of a Roman camp. For almost all traces of the camp which could be seen a century ago, when the enclosure was said to bear ' a striking resemblance to the form of those Roman towns whose outlines may still be traced in this country ', have vanished ; and though an ivy-grown fragment of an old chapel, which formerly exempted the parish from the payment of tithes, still stands on a small mound which has been called the *praetorium* of the camp, a vivid imagination is necessary to reconstruct upon such evidence what may have been a Roman fortress. But the church tower, if ugly, is certainly unique, and the presence of Roman bricks in the church walls proves that the statements of antiquaries concerning the early importance of the place are not without foundation. Human remains, too, have been unearthed in large quantities near the river bank ;



ABOVE ST. OLAVES





but whether, as is said, they were those of the slain in a battle fought near the staithe, is entirely a matter of surmise.

At Oulton, as in the neighbourhood of other large Broad, I can remember meeting with a few Broadsmen of the old type—men who still managed to exist on their scanty earnings as reed-cutters and eel-catchers. One of these men had a handy little sailing house-boat in which he spent the greater part of the winter, and in its cosy if somewhat cramped little cabin I often sat with him and chatted about the 'good old days' when milk was a penny a pail, fresh butter ninepence a pound, and new country cheese threepence halfpenny. Poor folk, he told me, could *live* then. His father had the 'run' of the Acle new road across the marshes for his horses and cattle, which grazed on the grassy borders between the road and the dykes; but 'they maint du that now'! Protecting and preserving had compelled him to abandon all his old methods of livelihood except eel-catching; and if it had not been for the yachting folk, who found work for him in the summer, he did not know how he could have lived. I gently suggested that though the stopping of fish-netting may have entailed some hardship to such as he, trawling for fresh-water fish was calculated to spoil the rivers for the draw-netters as well as the anglers; but he vehemently assured me that the trawlers caught nothing but eels, and when I ventured to doubt this, quoting the evidence of the witnesses who saw the fish landed at Yarmouth, he more than hinted that he had been in a better position than any one else to know what was caught. His house-boat, when I last saw it, was moored in the only quiet and unspoilt creek which the Oulton waters now possess, and I thought it characteristic of the old man who had so great a love of the river life that he should have chosen the one spot which retained its primitive aspect and charm.

The Waveney between Oulton Dyke and Beccles is wide and deep, and with a fair wind a passage is soon made to the little town, whose massive church tower can be seen many miles across the marshes. Indeed, a speedy passage is generally considered desirable, except by those cruisers who are content with the beauty of waterside wild flowers and water-mirrored reeds and rushes; for this part of the Waveney

presents few striking vistas, though it has some pretty 'bits' here and there, where an alder carr has its jungle of towering willow-herbs, cat valerians, and marsh thistles, or a marshman's cottage stands close by the riverside, half hidden by willows and sallows. But even these marsh-bordered reaches are often remarkable for the wealth of colour they reveal. The green of the summer reeds, the lavender tint of the water-stained rush-beds, and the ruddy hues of the sun-scorched leaves of dock and meadow-sweet—each, perhaps, with its counterpart in the unruffled water—give infinite variety to the low, level banks. On calm evenings, after the sun has set, the river is often like a sheet of glass; to look down into it is to see a sub-aqueous sky flecked with cloud-drift or gemmed with stars, and to feel a sensation of floating in aerial space. And when, after a hot summer day, the river banks are veiled with mist, one needs to look westward, where the upland's edge shows dark against the afterglow of sunset, to be assured that the extent of the still waters is not as vast as it is indefinable.

Beccles, apart from its fine Perpendicular church (which formerly belonged to the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury) and the view to be had from its churchyard, is chiefly of interest on account of the picturesque character of much of that part of the town which slopes down to the banks of the river just beyond its road and railway bridges. Here, the malt-houses, boat-yards, gardens, brightly-painted wherries, some fine old trees, and two or three houses of quaint styles of architecture, make a series of riverside pictures worthy of an old Dutch town and a painter of the Dutch school. Not one in a hundred Broadland cruisers sees Beccles from above the bridges; the majority of visitors, after strolling through the town, carry away with them the impression that it is perhaps the least attractive in the district. Nor in the course of the season do many people explore that part of the river which lies between Beccles and Bungay, though it is, as the lock-keeper at Geldeston maintained when he last opened the lock for me, 'uncommon pretty', and the river below Beccles not 'in it' when compared with it. Several things unite to make it unpopular with yachtsmen. One of these is its shallowness; another, its mazy windings, which not only make sailing a

matter of difficulty, but are in places so tortuous as to convey an impression that little or no headway is being made.

Then there are the locks at Geldeston, Ellingham, and Wainford, two of which the cruiser must open for himself; while, early in the season, before the cutting is done, the water-weeds almost choke up some of the reaches. But in spite of these drawbacks the trading wherries have managed to get up to Bungay all through the year, and those pleasure-seekers who follow in the wake of the wherries are well rewarded for the difficulties they encounter and overcome. For they usually have the twelve miles or so of waterway almost entirely to themselves; they are all the time in the midst of a district where the marshes are nowhere so wide as to make access to the uplands difficult, and at the end of their journey they reach as pleasant and picturesque an old country town as is to be found in East Anglia.

I made this voyage some years ago in my little gun-punt, the *Gipsy*, having for my companion the artist with whose work this book will make the reader well acquainted. We had reached Beccles about six o'clock on a mid-June evening, and were tempted by the fineness of the weather to continue our cruise. The breeze which had brought us quickly up from Oulton died away just before sunset; but the subtle charm of the dark woods and misty meadows in the twilight, the revelation of beauty at every bend of the stream, the cries of red-shank, snipe, and plover, and the songs of the reed-birds, made our slow progress on the dusk-darkened waters very pleasant. So clear was the water that even after the sun had gone down we could see the bright green weeds, and some of the little inlets were so covered with tiny white blossoms of water-crowfoot as to give them the appearance of being white with frost. The thick-stalked water-lilies were just showing their yellow heads above the stream; thicker-stalked hemlock often brushed the sides of our boat—for the weeds were as yet uncut; the air was filled with the aromatic odour of sweet sedge. A sense of complete isolation soon possessed us. After we had rowed a mile or so from Beccles we did not pass even a rowing boat, and until ten o'clock, when we reached Geldeston Lock, we saw no sign of any kind of sailing

craft—not even a wherry. But in a dyke near the lock a cheerful glow of light from a yacht's cabin indicated that other pleasure-seekers besides ourselves were taking an early-season cruise on the upper Waveney.

In the lock-house, which is also an alehouse, the landlord lock-keeper was entertaining half a dozen rustics, and after they were gone home we chatted with him for an hour or so about river and marsh life. We learnt that when he was a young man the Geldeston marshes, like those at Burgh Castle, were a favourite place for prize-fighting, the reason being, as in the case of Burgh, that the pugilists, if interrupted by the authorities of one county, could cross the river and resume hostilities in another, where the disturbing element was absent or had no power to act. Concerning King, Mace and some noted Romany bruisers he discoursed in a way which would have moved George Borrow to many lamentations that the days of the pugilists are gone ; so vividly did he describe an encounter between a famous prize-fighter and a local celebrity known as ' Blazer ' High, that I, who could remember High only as a comparatively peaceable wheelwright in my native village, found myself regretting that I had not been born soon enough to witness just one of those stirring contests. But it was growing late, and we had not solved the difficulty of finding beds, so we were compelled to turn the conversation in another direction. There was no room for us at the lock-house, nor was it likely we could find accommodation in the village ; and the last trains to Beccles and Bungay were gone. The prospect of having to walk to one of these towns did not please us, so, on learning that we had the alternative of sleeping in a big boat moored in a boat-house near the lock, we agreed to accept it. Laden with an old sail, a large rug, a couple of sacks, and an old horn lantern, we sallied forth from the inn into the dark night, and made our way to our draughty lodgings. By the faint lantern light the interior of the boat-house looked uninviting ; so, after depositing our heterogeneous assortment of bedclothes in the boat, we extinguished the lantern and went for an hour's stroll across the Shipmeadow marshes. By feeling the firmness of the turf rather than by sight we kept to the footpath until the



*Trunk Southgate*

BECCLES







harsh 'crek, crek' of a landrail tempted us to leave it, and we almost trod on the skulking bird before it rose from amid the long marsh grass. The path brought us to a lane into which, as we soon discovered, the waters of a ditch had been diverted, and after a brief experience of this oozy by-way we returned to our quarters for the night.

The old boat-house was open towards the river, and, after two or three hours' sleep, we awoke to find the eastern sky radiant with a brazen dawn-light. A boisterous wind, increasing in force, was blowing, and some young poplars on the opposite bank of the river were bowing before it. The air was filled with the storm-song of tossing reeds, willows, and sailows; along the riversides the sedge rustled loudly, white umbrells of wild parsley waved wildly, and the brilliant blossoms of the water-flags were torn by the sharp-edged sedge blades. The unmown marsh grass rose and fell in green and grey waves, over which the bright yellow buttercups spread a tremulous golden haze. When a sedge-warbler rose above the reeds it seemed as helpless as a wisp of thistledown, and was swept back into the reeds again. The sky was full of flying clouds, but every wind-gust blotted out their reflections in the water, which was constantly being dimmed like a breath-blown mirror.

For an hour or so we loitered about the lock-house, hoping that the wind, which was dead against us, would moderate; and the lock-keeper, to entertain us, showed us a clever drawing given to him by an artist-angler, some stuffed birds, a couple of fine sea lamperns taken in the lock, and a perch weighing five pounds two ounces—the largest, he said, that had been taken in the river. But we were anxious to continue our cruise; so, after admiring the lock-keeper's treasures, we boarded our punt, passed through the lock, and began the toughest bit of rowing we had had for many a day. At times we found it impossible to make headway; the wind, if it did not force our boat into the bank, held it so fast in midstream that if it had not been a flat-bottomed punt we might have believed it aground. Yet we could not stop rowing, for once, when we paused a moment to watch a mole which had taken to the water and was swimming like a vole across the river, its little pink snout raised just above the surface, we drifted

backward far faster than we had gone forward. The three miles of river between Geldeston and Ellingham seemed by far the longest miles of our cruise, and when we reached the fine old water-mill, which was the most picturesque feature of this part of the river, we had had, although it was only eight o'clock in the morning, enough rowing for that day. So we moored under the lee side of a granary near the mill, and my companion, who was anxious to reach Bungay, set out for Ellingham station.

Two miles above Ellingham is Wainford Lock, adjoining which are huge maltings and a flour-mill. This is a very ancient place, for here was a ford on the Roman road from *Venta Icenorum* (Caistor St. Edmund) to the coast at *Sitomagus* (Dunwich), and here, in a later period, the Hundred Moot of Wangford, or Wainford, was held. The road ran to the east of the malt-houses, where Roman relics have been unearthed ; and Dr. Raven, in his *History of Suffolk*, suggests that if the mill were pulled down valuable discoveries might be made ; but only learned archaeologists can find, in the narrow by-roads which run from Ditchingham station to Mettingham, traces of the Stone Street of the Romans. However, a ramble from the lock to Mettingham, where there are some ruins of a castle built by Sir John de Norwich, one of Edward III's vice-admirals, is well worth taking ; as is that to Ditchingham village and the Bath Hills which border the Waveney where it makes a horseshoe bend round Bungay Common. But as these are places which can be visited as easily from Bungay, most voyagers on the Waveney prefer to complete their upward cruise before exploring the neighbourhood of that old Norman town. This they can soon do, for it is only about a mile from Wainford to Bungay Staithe.

Above Bungay Staithe the Waveney is unnavigable to sailing boats ; but that part of the river which from the water-mill near the staithe makes a bend round the town and its large, breezy common, is worth exploring. The road over the mill-bridge leads to a footpath along the riverside and the Falcon Inn at Ditchingham, an old coaching inn far more famous a century ago than it is to-day. Here, boats suited to the shallows of the upper reaches can be hired, and the voyage upstream continued. For about a mile the river winds

through marshes ; but above a low wooden footbridge, beneath which, when the river is swollen by heavy rains, boats pass with difficulty, there is, on the Norfolk bank, the loveliest bit of scenery on the Waveney. A steep wooded bank or hanger, known as the Bath Hills, here slopes downwards to the very edge of the water, so that woodland wild flowers, such as anemones and bluebells, grow close beside the brilliant water-flags and dainty pink ragged robins, and the bright green leaves of that curious-looking plant, the setterwort, are seen within a few yards of patches of pink-spiked orchids. The water is so clear that the waving streamers and succulent stalks of the water-weeds are everywhere visible ; and so sheltered is it that its surface is seldom ruffled, and reflects the overspreading horse-chestnuts, ashes, planes, and rowans like a mirror. For years this lovely reach was my favourite haunt in idle hours, and I was never tired of watching the shoals of fish darting by my boat, the brilliant hued dragon-flies poising in films of vibrating wings, and listening to the wood doves crooning among the tree-tops. I remember that it was just by the old rifle-butts behind which the wooded slope forms a natural bank that I first found the beautiful yellow archangel or weasel-snout in bloom, and near by *Daphne laureola* and the acrid lettuce, three plants rare enough in Norfolk to make the finding of them here an interesting event in a botanist's life.

As a boy I loved to scramble up the precipitous path behind the rifle-butts—having first made sure that the local volunteers were not using the range, for the bullets often went wide of the target—for that steep path leads to a clematis-garlanded lane along the crest of the hills—a lane so embowered with trees that in summer it is a leafy crypt. But there are places where glimpses may be had of the wide common with its golden gorse, and beyond it the red roofs and church tower of Bungay town. It is a lane for idle hours and day-dreams, and I know that often, when I looked down on the river slowly winding through the cattle-dotted marshlands, I dreamt of the days when sea-tides came flooding up the Waveney valley, bringing with them the Viking ships of the Norse raiders, whose raven banners were of such ill omen to

the Saxon dwellers on the borders of the vale. For I had heard of the finding of ships' anchors and strange weapons in the peat of the marshlands, and had read of the Danes' ravages on our eastern shores. And all the romance of the red-roofed town, with its Norman castle and the mysterious underground passage which I firmly believed connected it with the castle at Mettingham, was brought near to me when I saw the town from this leafy height, and could detach myself from the familiar scenes I daily witnessed in its quiet streets. And when I read somewhere that the parish of Earsham, whose sky-pointing church spire I could see to the right of the town, had formerly paid a yearly sum towards the maintenance of the sea-walls at Lowestoft, which kept the sea from bursting in upon the marshes stretching away from the foot of the hills, the imagining of such an inrush of the sea afforded me mental diversion for hours together. The fact that centuries had elapsed since the ocean's pulse was felt beating so far inland only gave the imagination wider scope for the spreading of its wings.

This leafy lane, which is in places so narrow that the path is almost hidden by ferny parsley leaves and drooping brome grasses, skirts the borders of the late Sir Rider Haggard's Ditchingham estate, and it is on a part of the slopes, known as the 'Earl's Vineyard', that the scene is laid of a tragic episode in the early chapters of the novelist's romance, *Montezuma's Daughter*. Readers of that stirring story easily recognize here, too, other scenes described in it, and when they return to Bungay, and climb the steep street leading to the market-place, they find much in that quaint and quiet little town unchanged since the times with which the story deals. The round towers of the Bigod's castle, flanked by huge earthworks, still frown down on the smiling pasture-lands of the lush-grassed vale, and amid the crumbling but massive walls a shaft leads down to a grim, dark dungeon into which daylight has not penetrated for eight hundred years. Not far away stands a fine old church, originally that of the Benedictine nunnery which lost one of its abbesses through the ravage of the Black Death; a little beyond it, the churchyards only separated by a street of almost sylvan aspect, an older church retains its Norman tower. In the market-place, nearly opposite the old





GELDESTON LOCK



Tuns inn, a dome-roofed market-cross has whipping-post irons still affixed to one of its pillars ; and in St. Mary's Street, facing the church, is a sixteenth-century house with richly carved corbels, the guest-house, some have said, of the nunnery whose precincts it once adjoined. But, for the rest, the town is comparatively modern, for in 1688 it was almost entirely destroyed by an incendiary fire, which gave rise to the local saying, ' As big a rogue as burnt Bungay '. Yet it is not so very long since it was discovered that it possessed another relic of its past even more ancient than the earthworks amid which its Norman castle stands ; for when an old windmill beside the Flixton road was pulled down its foundations were found to rest on a tumulus filled with human bones. I remember how the Bungay folk stood and wondered when it was seen that the skeletons lay in a circle, each with its feet towards a common centre, and how an interested townsman possessed himself of a fine set of ivory-white teeth !

The town is as charmingly situated as any in Broadland. No matter by what road you leave it, it is one more likely to lure you onward than make you think of retracing your steps. The best road is that leading to Mettingham, for, in addition to the delight of rambling through charming rural scenes, you have a definite object in view in following it. For it leads to the ruined castle I have once or twice referred to. This castle has no historical interest, but its lofty walls rising amid fine old trees make a striking picture, and its fine gate-tower is well preserved. From Mettingham a lane and field footpath lead to the verge of the uplands which border the Waveney valley, and the view from the uplands' edge is one of great charm and loveliness. To the right many miles of the vale lie revealed, with the river like a wavy silver thread in a cloth of green ; to the left the picturesque promontory on which Bungay stands juts out into the lowlands ; and through the midst of the vale the dark-sailed wherries glide along the serpentine reaches, like vessels which have lost their way. From the point where this prospect can be viewed it is not far to the road which leads back to the town and Bungay Staithe.

Not long ago, when the waters of the Waveney were checked

in their downward flow by narrow-arched wooden bridges at Beccles and Bungay, floods were of frequent occurrence in the Waveney valley. Dwellers amidst and on the borders of the marshes often saw the swollen river overflow its banks, and for days together many miles of marshland were submerged. If these inundations occurred in winter they were of little consequence, except when they rose so high as to flood the lower rooms of the marsh-folk's houses ; indeed, when frosty weather accompanied them, the submerged levels afforded excellent skating for the inhabitants of the towns and villages in the valley ; but a summer flood was a more serious affair. Once in the month of July it rained heavily on several successive days, and the river rose rapidly. Still the marshes were not flooded until one night about a week after the rain began, and even on that night there was no water on the levels when the marsh-folk went to bed. But about midnight it swept across the valley, and from that hour until daybreak lights were burning in and around scores of cottages between Beccles and Bungay, where cottagers were hastily conveying upstairs the contents of the lower rooms, and removing pigs and poultry to places of safety. When day dawned the green marshlands had become a waste of waters, stretching in some directions almost as far as eye could see ; and down the river was drifting a procession of haycocks which had floated off the meadows. The marsh dams at Ditchingham, Earsham, and Gillingham were impassable to foot passengers ; to the houses bordering Ditchingham Dam the postman rowed in a boat. Farmers whose hay crops were ruined, and women whose household goods had suffered, looked depressed and disheartened ; but to the children the flood was a novel and welcome experience. The marshes were transformed into an unexplored Pacific, an untraversed main, and as many of the lads as could get boats set out on voyages of discovery—voyages attended by dangers in the shape of submerged tree-stumps. For four days scores of marsh-folk were compelled to keep to the upper chambers of their houses ; but at the end of that time they saw the cucumber frames in their gardens emerge, like welcome Ararats, from the flood. Since wider-arched bridges have been built over the river there has been no serious inundation.

## CHAPTER IX

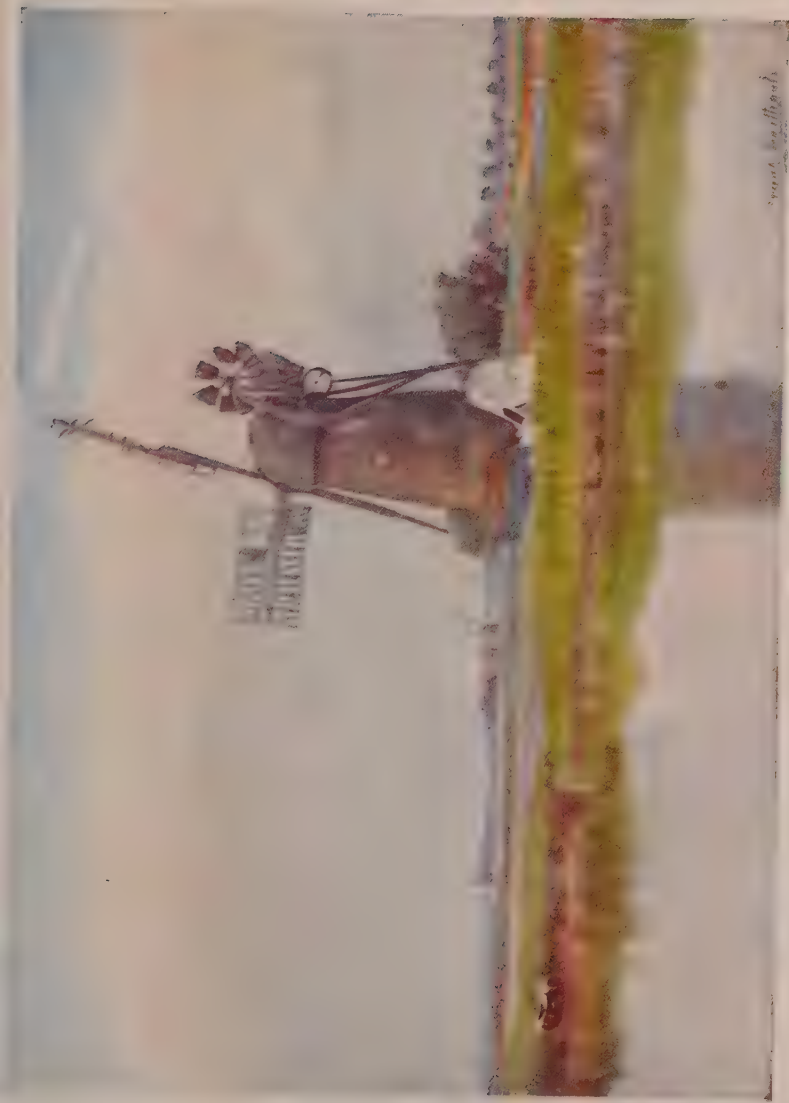
### THE BURE AND ITS BROADS

A LARGE number of the yachting folk who visit Broadland confine their cruising to the Bure and its tributaries, some because lack of time prevents their exploring the Yare and Waveney; others because, as they often urge, the Bure and its tributaries bring them in touch with the best of the Broads and every kind of Broadland scenery. So long as the influent Ant and Thurne are included with the main stream I am quite ready to admit that the Bure should be considered the chief river of Broadland and the best for loveliness and variety of charm; but, at the same time, I think that no one who knows the district intimately will deny that the more frequented and popular reaches of the Bure do not possess that unique and weirdly impressive beauty which is to be enjoyed at its best and subtlest on such wild wildernesses of reeds and water as Hickling Broad and Heigham Sounds. The most popular part of the Bure is that which lies between Acle and Wroxham, and embraces some of the best-known Broads; but I am not alone in thinking that while Wroxham, Ranworth, Salhouse, and South Walsham Broads are as pretty as it is possible for little lakes to be, and in late autumn and winter are undeniably lovely, they are lacking in that primeval, isolate beauty—I had almost written sublimity—characteristic of those Broads and river reaches which lie in the midst of wide level marshes and tracts of sedgy fen. Compared with Heigham Sounds at dawn or sunset, and Horsey Mere when the sun lights up the sandhill ridges of Horsey and Waxham, Wroxham and Ranworth seem to me simply pretty—as pretty as it is possible for wood-girt waters to be, no doubt, but not particularly impressive. But such comparisons are uncalled for. Degrees of beauty are hardly definable, and the appreciation



of them is a matter of mood and temperament. On the Bure and its tributaries, and in the district which surrounds them, there is scenery to satisfy almost every one, and interest enough to occupy the mind of a visitor for a far longer time than most people can devote to it.

The lower waters of the Bure—that is to say, those reaches which lie between Acle Bridge and Breydon—are often described as uninteresting and featureless. Taking at random the opinions of three writers, I find one saying that ‘the landscape is singularly uninteresting, being composed of water, marshes, and sky, with very little to break the monotony’; another, that the country hereabouts is ‘lacking in picturesqueness’; and a third, that ‘the banks are unlovely and the scenery beyond them very unattractive’. But I have cruised on the lower Bure in company with an artist who maintained that almost every bend of the river presented a picture well worth painting. The ferries and ferrymen’s houses, the windmills, and the marsh farmsteads and millmen’s houses, with their long, low, thatched or red-tiled outbuildings, seen, as they generally are, with no other background than the sky, but with the gleaming river and perhaps an eel-fisher’s house-boat moored in a creek in the foreground, form charming subjects for brush or pencil. Beyond the river walls, too, there are, during several months of the year, innumerable cattle-pieces worthy of the genius of a Paul Potter or a Sidney Cooper—hundreds of cattle often being visible between the walls and the far-off, mill-dotted sky-line. Runham Church also, with its shapely, slender-pinnacled tower rising from amid a grove of trees, makes a pleasant picture as seen from Herringby Staithe; and so does Stokesby as you approach it from Yarmouth, and see its fine windmill whirling its sails above the red roofs of the waterside cottages; while as for Yarmouth, as it appears for several miles beyond its bridges, Joseph Pennell has shown us what can be made of such a subject. Scenery possessing such features as these cannot justly be called tame, monotonous, and lacking in picturesqueness, especially when, as is the case with this part of the Bure, these features often group themselves into strikingly effective combinations. That there is abundant colour in these wide,



MILL COUNTRY ABOVE STOKESBY



flat landscapes no one who sees the marshland studies which illustrate this book can doubt ; the loveliest colour-effects are to be seen on the marshes and along the river.

But unless the voyager can find pleasure in marshland scenery there is little, I must admit, to tempt him to linger on the lower Bure. The churches at Runham and Stokesby are in no way remarkable, and all that is worth seeing in the villages can be seen from the river. At Acle, however, there is an interesting church about a mile from the old single-arched bridge which spans the river ; and visitors with antiquarian inclinations can amuse themselves with trying to discover the site of Weybridge Priory, and so settle a matter of dispute among local antiquaries. For there was formerly a priory at Acle, an Augustinian house founded by one of the Bigods, Earls of Norfolk ; and the late Rev. Dr. Cox told me that it stood near the church, where some inequalities of ground level marked the position of its chief building and some skeletons unearthed there were supposed to be those of the monks of Weybridge and the knights and dames who were buried in the Priory church.

All through the summer a good many yachts are moored above and below Acle Bridge, and on regatta day a lively scene is presented around the well-known Angel Inn. When I come to Wroxham I will try and describe one of these Broadland regattas ; for the present I will only say that the water festival held at Acle towards the end of July is by no means the least popular, and when the river is thronged with all kinds of craft, and yachts afloat and flagstaffs ashore are a-flutter with bunting, the neighbourhood of the old brick bridge is one to be either sought or avoided—this, again, is a matter of temperament. Some cruisers prefer it when only a few wherries are moored at the staithe below the bridge, urging that the wherries are more in harmony with the weather-beaten bridge and inn than are the dainty yachts of the pleasuring folk. The average Broadland wherry gives plenty of colour to any scene of which it is a feature. I remember an evening when two of them were moored near the bridge. They were remarkable for their brilliant hues. The top of the mast and the sides of the hold of one were painted Pyrenese green ;

the square wooden chimney of the cabin was bright red, as were the rigging blocks and tabernacle ; the cabin door was dark blue relieved by yellow bands ; and the top of the tiller and its handle, the gaff and flag-frame, were white. The other wherry, which had only that morning left a Coltishall wherry-builder's yard, where it had been repainted, had red, white, and blue bands round the top of the mast, and beneath them was a two-feet band of burnished brass ; flag, tabernacle, blocks, and cabin roof were vermilion, and the tiller and cabin door were royal blue and yellow. Both wherries were ' light ', and one showed something of a white, the other of a pale green keel. All these colours were reflected in the water, where they shimmered and melted one into another whenever a breath of wind or a passing boat sent ripples running towards the shore.

Above Acle Bridge the scenery of the Bure becomes more varied, but there is nothing to tempt any one to land until Thurne Mouth is passed and the ruined gateway of St. Benet's Abbey is seen close by the riverside, on some slightly elevated ground—once a kind of fen isle—among the Cowholm marshes. At first glance it may seem that there is little besides the gateway to call for attention ; but a stroll along the riverside below the gateway, and a visit to the crumbling walls on the highest point of the old island, reveal much that is interesting. Close by the waterside the foundations—' groundsels ' the marshmen call them—of several of the vanished monastery's buildings can be traced, while on the high ground are considerable remains of the walls of the cruciform abbey church in which the famous Sir John Fastolff of Caister Castle was buried. Distinctly traceable, too, are the foundations of the boundary wall, which extended from the riverside near the gateway a long way into the marshes, and returned to the river again some distance below the abbey church. This wall was buttressed, as can be seen from what remains of it ; and it appears to have been bordered by rows of hawthorns and blackthorns, the stumps of which can still be seen. Apparently there were small towers at the angles of the wall, for there are some foundations which suggest this at the lower point where the wall reaches the riverside. Of the scanty ruins, however, the gateway is the most interesting portion. Its



outer arch has a shield in each spandrel, a complete but empty niche on the right-hand side, and remains of another on the left. On the left side, too, are eighteen steps of a spiral staircase, over which are restored pointed arches. A good many years ago a brick windmill was built within and upon the gateway; and within the tower, which is all that is left of this mill, is another arch with good mouldings, the inner foliated, having in the spandrels some fairly well-preserved carvings. There is also some vaulting with three bosses, and a piece of wall attached to the gateway: the latter probably formed part of the refectory. Until a few years ago the cattle which grazed on the neighbouring marshes could enter the gateway, but now it is surrounded by a railing which prevents their stumbling among and rubbing themselves against the crumbling masonry. But nothing has been done to protect the river bank, where the bones of the old monks of St. Benet's are often scoured from their unmarked graves.

According to the old chroniclers, the land on which the monastery stood was, in the eighth century, given by a local prince to a recluse named Suneman who, with other religious men, dwelt on it peaceably until the Danes ravaged East Anglia, demolished the hermitage, and killed its inmates. A century later a certain Wulfrie followed the example of Suneman, and retired here; but when the Danes attained undisputed possession of the country, King Canute founded for the Benedictines the monastery of St. Benet-at-Holm. This monastery was a fortified house, and when the Conqueror sent a force against it, the monks, aided, no doubt, by the men of the neighbouring hamlets, were able to hold out for some time against the besiegers. But through the treachery of a captured monk named Ethelwald, the Normans eventually succeeded in entering the great gate and gaining possession of the monastery. As a reward for his treachery, the monk had been promised the abbacy, and in fulfilment of this promise the Normans arrayed him in an abbot's robe, placed a mitre on his head, and went through the ceremony of installation. Then, disgusted with the man's conduct, they had him hanged above the gateway.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent to this siege the history of

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that these stories are legendary.

the monastery is unexciting. Many wealthy knights and nobles endowed it with lands and money, and when they died were buried in the fine abbey church; distinguished guests were often entertained by the abbots, who amused them with falconry on the surrounding marshes. At the general suppression in 1537, the abbot at that time, William Rugge, was translated to the see of Norwich, to which the revenues of the abbey were also transferred. He and his successors retained the title of Abbot of St. Benet-at-Holm, by right of which dignity the present Bishop of Norwich has a seat in the House of Lords. Previous to the Dissolution the abbots had a residence or 'grange' at Ludham, where parts of it are still embodied in the Hall Farm. This grange afterwards became a country seat of the Bishops of Norwich. The Hall Farm can be reached by a marsh wall or causeway which runs from the abbey gateway to the road which leads to the farm.

Almost opposite the gateway is a mile-and-a-half-long dyke leading to South Walsham Broad. There are few more enjoyable things than a quiet row or a sail in a small yacht up this and other similar dykes in summer. True, the tall reeds on either side hide the marshlands beyond them; but this prevents one's attention being distracted from the wild flowers—the loosestrifes, willow-herbs, and hemp agrimonies—which deck the banks, and the birds which haunt these narrow watercourses. It was while sailing up South Walsham Dyke that I saw a snipe standing on a post close to the water, and I shall never forget the perfect picture it made, nor the absolute disregard of human intrusiveness with which it looked about it from its elevated perch. During that cruise I particularly noted how frequently snipes and redshanks were to be seen occupying similar positions, chosen probably because of the extended outlook they afforded. Swallow-tail butterflies are often plentiful on the marshes bordering South Walsham Dyke, and some of the little creeks, inlets, and cuttings made in the dyke banks by winter flight-shooters are full of treasures for the entomologist.

Although rather small, and by the luxuriance of its aquatic growths divided into two sheets of water, South Walsham is a very charming Broad, particularly that part of it entered

ACLE BRIDGE





by way of a narrow channel called the Weirs. It is a private Broad, but until recently it was generally supposed that the public had a right of way across it. For some time, however, there were occasional disputes between a riparian owner and the people of Ranworth, an adjoining village, as to whether this right of way extended to the inner and prettier portion of the Broad, and on Whit-Monday of 1901 these disputes culminated in a rather lively scene. On that day, on hearing that some of the Ranworth people proposed making a public demonstration in support of the right they claimed, certain persons, presumably acting on behalf of the riparian owner, moored a large house-boat broadside across the narrowest part of the Weirs, blocking the channel leading to the Inner Broad. This in itself was a formidable obstacle for a fleet of small boats to encounter; and it was made the more so by having small hand fire-engines placed at its bow and stern, while from under the canvas of the house-boat a long glistening barrel was extended, resembling, according to an eye-witness of what took place, a Vickers-Maxim gun: in reality it was a long telescope from which the glass had been removed. During the afternoon several hundred people, among them the Vicar of Ranworth and the chairman of the Parish Council, assembled on the staithe, where they were approached by the riparian owner's agent and a Norwich solicitor. The former requested the crowd to leave the staithe; but the chairman of the Parish Council protested that the staithe was a public place, and until late in the day the villagers remained in possession of it. A good many uncomplimentary remarks were shouted to the persons on board the house-boat, but no attempt was made to force a passage through the Weirs. Subsequently the riparian owner established in a court of law his claim to the staithe; but when I visited South Walsham Broad a few weeks after the Whit-Monday proceedings, I found the Weirs open, and no attempt was made to stop me from sailing round the Inner Broad. Across the Outer Broad, which is entered by way of South Walsham Dyke, there is a right of way to South Walsham Staithe, from which the churches of St. Mary and St. Lawrence, both standing in the same churchyard, are distant about a mile. St. Lawrence's



Church was partly destroyed by fire in 1827, and its tower is in ruins.

Quarter of a mile above St. Benet's Abbey is the mouth of the Ant, a river to be dealt with in the next chapter. Another mile or so, and the dyke is reached which leads to Ranworth Broad. To boats drawing no more than four feet of water this dyke is usually navigable ; but cruisers in yachts of deeper draught generally continue their voyage to Horning Ferry, where they can land on the opposite bank to that on which the Ferry Inn stands, and stroll to Ranworth by the pleasant road which leads down to the ferry. Between St. Benet's Abbey and Horning Ferry there are two or three very pretty reaches, that which Horning Church overlooks from the left bank being perhaps the most charming up to that point. In this neighbourhood a few marshmen may occasionally be seen cutting peat by the riverside. The peat, locally called turf or hovers, is cut into square blocks, which were formerly sold at a shilling a hundred. Rafts laden with these blocks often passed the Ferry Inn.

Ranworth is not the least delightful of the Broad's lying between Acle and Wroxham ; but the parish is more famous for having in its church one of the finest and best-preserved rood-screens in the county. Indeed, the committee of the Society of Antiquaries assert that as a whole there is ' nothing of the sort remaining to equal it in England '. ' East Anglia,' the committee's report states, ' still contains a considerable number of painted screens, some of much merit, in its churches, but for delicacy and richness of detail that of Ranworth is unsurpassed. The beautiful diapers on the robes of the saints and apostles painted on the panels, and the elaborate flower-work which adds to and heightens the effect of the architectural features, make the whole composition suggestive of a great initial page of some splendidly illuminated manuscript.' The paintings are said to recall the school of Meister Wilhelm of Cologne, and it is thought they may have been the work of German artificers who settled in Norwich during the fifteenth century. Especially to be noted are the figures of St. Lawrence and St. Michael, and the details of the vestments of many of the saints. The church has undergone a much-needed

restoration ; but, needless to say, the screen, which is as remarkable for the delicacy of its carved work as for the beauty of its paintings, has not been interfered with.

The Broad, like South Walsham, is private property ; but there is a right of way across the eastern portion to the village. The western portion, which is divided from the other by reed-beds, is a wild-fowl preserve and strictly private ; formerly it was a noted place for decoying, very large quantities of duck, teal, and widgeon being captured during severe winters. The chief charms of the Broad in summer are its isolation, picturesque surroundings, lovely white water-lilies, and the glimpses one gets of yellow reed-stacks and old cottages and farmsteads on its shores ; but it is seen at its best in autumn, when its reeds have attained their full height, and the leaves of its bordering trees have changed from green to crimson and gold.

While walking on a June day through Woodbastwick on my way to Ranworth, I came upon some marshmen reed-stacking close beside the road which leads down to Horning Ferry. It was rather late in the year for such work to be in progress, but I learnt that the reeds had been a long time drying, or they would have been stacked before. It was a characteristic Broadland scene, of which the chief features were the wide flat reed-rafts being quanted up a dyke, the stacks with their light and dark layers of reeds, and the marshmen clad in clothes of a russet hue which harmonized well with the yellow reeds. On every side were flat, fenny lands, where purple-headed meadow thistles, dusky marsh cinquefoils, pale green marsh ferns, sweet-gales, water-flags, and ragged robins grew amid young reeds, brown bents, and tawny and green rushes. I got into conversation with the reed-stackers, and learnt that in the neighbourhood of Woodbastwick the cutters reckon six sheaves to go to a fathom of reeds ; while at Barton and elsewhere a fathom consists of five sheaves, the difference being due to the varying quality of the reeds. Ninety fathoms went to the making of a Woodbastwick reed-stack, so that each of the stacks which were being heaped up by the dykeside consisted of five hundred and forty sheaves.

The neighbourhood of Horning is one of the chief haunts

of the Broadland flight-shooters, and some good bags have been made on the river between the ferry and St. Benet's Abbey. Some of the rare birds which have been shot in this district are in the Castle Museum at Norwich ; but one of the finest cases of bitterns I know of is to be seen at the Ferry Inn, where is a splendid male bird shot by the landlord, and a female which fell to another sportsman's gun. A century ago the booming of the bittern was a familiar sound in Broadland ; but in the Rev. R. Lubbock's time, the locally breeding bitterns had considerably decreased in numbers. The reed-beds of Hickling Broad, Heigham Sounds, and Catfield were the favourite haunts of the species ; but in the middle of the last century it also bred at Ranworth, where one was shot in the act of feeding its young. Upton, near Acle, was for many years believed to be its last nesting-place ; but in recent years bitterns have returned to some of their old-time haunts, and their weird so-called 'booming'—one of the strangest of bird notes—may sometimes be heard when dusk deepens on the marshlands. The marshmen used to call the bitterns 'buttles' ; and Dr. Emerson met an old man who had shot three in five minutes in Catfield Fen, where, the old man said, they used, like the herons, to alight on the trees.

There are some good colour-effects among the old houses of that part of the village of Horning which is passed about half a mile above the ferry, where the river takes a sharp bend to the left ; but the impression they make upon the voyager is forgotten as soon as he enters upon the first of the delightful reaches which extend from this point up to and beyond Wroxham Bridge. Above Horning the river banks are in many places well wooded, and close beside the river are several Broad. The presence of the first of these Broad is betrayed, when Horning is passed, by the clamour of the black-headed gulls, which have a colony on Hoveton Little Broad. This Broad, which is about eighty acres in extent, contains several small islets and some large beds of reeds, upon and among which the gulls assemble in spring, make their nests, and rear their young. But without special permission it is impossible to witness the interesting sight presented when the little gulls have been hatched off, for the



REED-STACKING





Broad is strictly preserved, and the little fluffy birds are never disturbed while they swim about the edges of the open pools and creep among the rushes and sedges. Even a finer sight is presented by Hoveton Great Broad, which extends from opposite the lower end of Wroxham Broad to a point about a mile farther downstream; for there a much larger number of gulls breed yearly. But this Broad also is preserved, and there are chains across the entrances to it from the river. Yet even this colony is nothing like so large and interesting as that at Scoulton Mere, near Watton in Norfolk. There—where they are known as ‘Scoulton puits’—I have seen the gulls rise from the water in such numbers as wholly to blot out the trees behind them, and the clamour they make is almost deafening. Beautiful birds are these wild-crying puit-gulls, and their presence constitutes one of the charms of Broadland. Whether seen circling above a Broad, flying tern-like over a reed-bed, feeding on a Breydon flat, or floating on the still water, they are delightful to behold; the gleam of their white wings against the blue of the summer sky is a joy and an inspiration.

Not far from Hoveton Little Broad, on the south side of the river, at a point where it turns sharply southward, is Decoy or Woodbastwick Broad, which, like the Hoveton Broads, is private water. It can scarcely be seen from the river—nor, as a matter of fact, can any of the Broads in this neighbourhood—on account of the riverside reeds, sallows, and alders. I have seen it suggested that it is a good plan for the visitor who is sailing in a large yacht to seat himself on the gaff of its mainsail, so that he may obtain a wider view of his surroundings; but not every one can enjoy the outlook, however picturesque it may be, from such an elevated and unsteady position. Nor is it necessary to climb so high to appreciate the loveliness of the river between Woodbastwick and Wroxham; while as for the beauties of Salhouse Broad, which yachts can enter by an opening on the left about a mile and a half above Hoveton Little Broad, they can be enjoyed at leisure. For Salhouse, though its fishing is preserved, is open to the public in so far that there is a right of way across it to the village. Connected with this Broad by

a dyke is Salhouse Little Broad, a very pretty pool, where the fishing is also preserved. From a hill above the Little Broad the best view of the cluster of Broad's in this neighbourhood can be enjoyed, not only the two Salhouse Broad's, with their sylvan surroundings, but the Hoveton Broad's and distant Wroxham, gleaming like a gem in a sylvan setting, contributing to the making of a scene of surpassing loveliness.

It is easy to understand how it is that so many pleasure-seekers are content, when they have once seen this part of the river, to confine their cruising to the Bure. There is charm and interest enough in a lovely little pool or 'pulk' which lies about a quarter of a mile below Wroxham Broad to content the eyes and mind of a visitor all through a long summer day. The surface of the pool is almost covered with the flowers and leaves of white and yellow water-lilies, and close to the bordering rushes and sedges are pink patches of *persicaria*, so beautiful that even the chaste loveliness of the glorious *nymphaeas* fails to distract attention from them. From among the dark green rushes coots and water-hens steal out at intervals, and swim to and fro until some involuntary movement betrays human presence and they disappear, the coots with a commotion which makes a drowsy warbler start singing as though in derision of the water-fowls' fright. Then a reed-bunting appears, and from the top of a reed-stalk sings, with uplifted head, its plaintive but rather unmusical song. Brilliant dragon-flies, 'like winged flowers or flying gems', some blue, others green, and yet others with black-tipped wings, poise above the water, wrapped in a film of wing-beats; perhaps a red admiral pays a fleeting visit to the wild flowers which bloom around the pool, and then, as the Ettrick Shepherd says, 'floats awa' in its wavering beauty . . . to some other nook of her ephemeral paradise'. Now and again a yacht or wherry glides down the river, its white or dark sail showing for a few moments through the foliage of the trees; but apart from this there is nothing about the pool to suggest that all the world is not contained within its sylvan and lacustrine fringe of trees and reeds. Only a short distance away, beyond the river, the marshlands are perhaps exposed to the full blaze of a summer sun, just as when

A summer stillness held the land—  
The windmill drooped its idle sail—  
Trembling with heat, the crystal air  
Quivered and glistened, as it were  
A silver woven veil ;

but over this shady pool a cool wind seems to breathe, and on its banks a spring freshness and fragrance to linger.

Around Salhouse Broad alone there are a score of subjects for an artist. The banks with their wild flowers and brown-topped reed-maces, the rustic boat-houses, the inlets with their coots and grebes, the reed- and hay-rafts, the staithe with a wherry moored alongside, all tend to make the Broad what it is—one of the most delightful and picturesque on the Bure. And if the voyager lands and strolls through the lanes and cornfields to the village church, he finds it hard not to envy the dwellers in this lovely district. Inside the church, which has a detached embattled tower, he finds, too, something of interest, for it contains an old hour-glass stand, and, attached to the rood-screen, a sanctus bell. After enjoying the beauties of South Walsham, Ranworth, and Salhouse, such a stroll is a pleasant break in a Broadland cruise, and the voyager returns to the river better able to appreciate Wroxham, which some have called the ' Queen of the Broads '.

So much has been written about Wroxham Broad that it is with diffidence I set down some of my impressions of it. As I have already suggested, it is not my favourite Broad ; but I can quite understand how it is that thousands of visitors to Broadland cannot find words to express its beauties. Unless one lives near it and is often afloat on it, it is almost impossible to see it twice wearing the same aspect ; in every season its moods are ever changing. One day it is as smooth as glass, mirroring every bird that flies over it and every flower that blooms along its reedy verge ; the next its reeds are wildly tossing their feathery plumes, and the water is in such turmoil that a small boat is hardly safe upon it. And then, after a day of storm and drenching rain, comes an evening when the wind dies away into a gentle breeze that scarcely makes a whisper among the reeds, a glorious glow of amber radiance in the west lights up the Broad, and the night which follows is

one of enchanting beauty. But before daybreak grey clouds overspread the sky, and in the dawn-light the surface of the Broad looks like a dull silver shield. Soon, however, the clouds begin to disperse, and some fine cloudscapes are reflected in the Broad as the rolling masses of white vapour are driven before the wind. By midday all the clouds are gone, and the water, where it is not agleam with sunlit ripples, is as blue as the sky. And of all the Broad's Wroxham is, I think, the best on which to appreciate the changes the seasons bring—in spring, the fresh green of the woodlands on its western shore ; in summer, the varied foliage of the trees and the luxurious aquatic growth of the swampy tracts which lie between the Broad and the river ; in autumn, the glorious hues of the withering leaves ; and in winter, the leafless reeds, golden as sun-ripened corn. Of its many aspects I hardly know which is the finest. If I have any preference, it is for that it shows on a calm November day when the sky is clear but a faint mist hangs over water and shore. Then the winter hues, which are often too hard and garish to be wholly pleasing, are softened and blended into something weird, mystic, and indescribably beautiful.

Wroxham Broad is about a hundred acres in extent ; its length is about a mile and its breadth about 300 yards. Although a decrease in its depth has become noticeable of late years, it is still deep enough to permit of the largest Broadland yachts sailing on it, and except near its shores there are none of those awkward shallows which make cruising on Hickling and Barton so difficult. On entering it from the river by the lower entrance—the only one now open—the voyager finds that on the west side the Broad is bordered by rising ground, for the most part well wooded, but here and there revealing a green lawn in front of some half-hidden house ; while on the east side a narrow tract of swampy ground, fringed with reeds and overgrown with willow and alder scrub, separates the Broad from the river. According to a decision of the Superior Courts, the Broad is private property ; but although a charge of half a crown a day is made for fishing—the money, I believe, going to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital—and the riparian owners object to yachts being moored on the Broad except



on regatta days, sailing and rowing are at all times freely permitted.

During the last week in July, when the cruising season is at its height, a slow procession of all kinds of Broadland craft makes its way up the Bure. At Acle and Horning regattas are held, in which not only regular racers but cruising yachts compete; then the whole fleet of wherries, pleasure-yachts, racers, and launches starts for Wroxham, where the most important regatta of the season is usually held on the first and second of August. At nine o'clock in the morning of the opening day the Broad presents a gay and lively aspect. By that time most of the cruising craft are moored and decked with bunting; but all day long small sailing boats keep arriving on the scene. Given fine weather, every one, from the chairman of the regatta committee to the juvenile occupants of the dilapidated marsh-boat which invariably gets in the way of the racers, is in good spirits. Yachtsmen don their whitest flannels and ladies wear their prettiest dresses; music is heard above the whispering of reeds and the fluttering of flags. In the neighbourhood of Wroxham Bridge a like gaiety prevails. Every train from Norwich, Yarmouth, and Cromer brings its load of yachting folk, whose yachts are ready to take them down to the Broad; blue-jerseyed crews stagger under the weight of well-filled hampers; trading wherries for a time become pleasure-craft, and are thronged with holiday-makers, each of whom is bent on enjoying himself to the utmost. In fact, every one realizes that this is the great day of the Broadland season. Only the angler who, forgetting it is regatta day, has come to Wroxham for a quiet day's fishing on the Broad, and learns that there is not a rowing boat to be had 'for love nor money', carries about with him a gloomy face.

At eleven o'clock the first race begins. Probably it is a race open to yachts of any rig or rating belonging to the local clubs. With a good sailing breeze the yachts get away well together. The course is ten times round the Broad, and the winning of the race generally depends as much on skilful sailing as on the good qualities of the winner. One or two competitors usually drop out before the race is over; one gets her main-sheet jammed; another, after lagging hopelessly



astern for an hour or more, vanishes through the entrance to the Broad. A certain yacht completes the ten rounds in about two hours ; but as her time allowance is fourteen minutes twenty-one seconds, ninety-nine of every hundred spectators do not know whether she is the winner until they read a report of the regatta in a newspaper next day. Then some of the cruising yachts have their turn. Great interest in this race is displayed by the cruisers in the competing craft, whose manifest glee when they are winning and depression when they are being badly beaten is often amusing. After a match for racing yachts some of the wherries compete. This is a race which usually arouses some excitement ; but in the 1901 regatta only two wherries entered for the first day's race, some idea of which can be gathered from a report which appeared next day : ' The starting gun fired at 4.15, and *Fawn* got away first. *Dauntless* was cruising about the top of the Broad, apparently in blissful ignorance that such a thing as a starting-gun was required. She got off at last, but of course had no chance.' The day's racing programme concludes with a dinghy race, for which there are usually a good many entries. Not infrequently, however, the start is made too late in the day, and the wind drops before the race is half over. When dusk comes down on the Broad a pretty scene is presented ; many of the yachts are illuminated, while rowing boats, carrying coloured lanterns, row in procession round the Broad. Across the still water comes the tinkling of banjos and music of voices blended in merry choruses. Late into the night lights are burning in many of the yachts' cabins, and often the sounds of revelry cease only when the light of dawn is seen in the eastern sky. The second day's proceedings resemble the first day's. Races for racing and cruising yachts, wherries, dinghies, and open and half-decked boats make up the programme, which is seldom completed until nightfall.

It is interesting to know that the very ancient ceremony of 'beating the bounds' survived at Wroxham till recently. On a certain day in the year the overseers, carrying willow wands decorated with milkwort, the rogation flower, and the heraldic colours of the parish, walk or 'beat' round the parish boundaries in order to see that no encroachments had been



MARSH HARRIER AND WOUNDED TEAL



made and the old landmarks were still traceable. The 'beaters' had the right to cross any lands, and pass through any garden or house through which the boundary lines run; and they were accompanied by two lads, whose heads were knocked against several trees, posts, and other solid landmarks in order that they might remember them. When this ceremony was performed in 1901 the 'beaters' succeeded in discovering an acre of land which for several years had been lost to the parish, and it was estimated that the expenses of the day's outing, which come out of the poor rate, were more than met by the rates recovered with this lost acre.

Just above Wroxham Bridge, opposite the King's Head Inn, is a small Broad, permission to visit which can be had at the inn; but it is of little interest, and need not delay any one who is bent on exploring the navigable upper reaches of the Bure. From Yarmouth to Wroxham Bridge the Bure is, as East Anglian rivers go, a fairly wide stream; but above the bridge it narrows considerably, though not so much as to make sailing very difficult. The scenery of these upper reaches is decidedly pretty, and between Wroxham and Coltishall the banks are, from June to September, decked with the loveliest of waterside wild flowers. After sailing some distance from the bridge, a stranger may well be surprised that the church he sees standing on the hill by the riverside is Wroxham Church; but the mystery is explained when he is told that a considerable portion of what is generally known as Wroxham is situated in the parish of Hoveton St. John, and that the parish of Wroxham really lies west of the bridge. The church, embowered by trees, makes a very charming picture as seen from the river, and is worth a close inspection on account of its good Norman south doorway. It was while sailing up the reach which the church dominates that I noticed, one June day, the air filled with white down which the wind had blown from the willow catkins; everywhere little wisps of this down were drifting before the breeze, and the water was covered with them. Almost opposite the church is a small sheet of water called Belaugh Broad, the last of the Bure Broad, and one possessing no distinctive or remarkable feature.

Not far above Belaugh Broad is a channel, on the left, called the Marl Pit Dyke, across the mouth of which a chain is usually drawn so that yachts cannot enter it. This dyke leads to a very pretty spot known as Little Switzerland, which was formerly open to the public, but which is now private. Next, on the opposite bank, comes the village of Belaugh, with its church standing on the summit of a steep bank sloping down to the riverside gardens. In one of these gardens there used to be seen a notice-board set up which was in striking contrast with those prohibitory ones that are such an unattractive features of the Bure's shores and Broad's, for it stated that ' Any one is welcome to come in this garden '. It seemed to me that a great many of the riparian owners in Broadland might, without experiencing any great annoyance, learn a lesson from the owner of a pretty little garden in humble Belaugh. The church, which a zealous Roundhead once said, referring to its position, was ' perked like one of the idolatrous high places of Israel ', contains a painted screen adorned with figures of the twelve apostles ; but the faces of the apostles were obliterated by a ' godly trooper ', to whom, as to his brother Roundhead, they gave offence. The emblems held by the apostles are a shell and staff, a ship, two fishes, a chalice, a sword and casket, keys and a book, a lamb and book, a knife, a spear, a wallet of money, a fuller's bat, and a cross. The font is good fifteenth-century work, and there is an interesting brass (date 1471) to Sir John Curson, who is represented in full armour.

Coltishall, about two and a half miles above Belaugh, is in many respects a delightful place ; undoubtedly it is the most picturesque waterside village in Broadland. Unlike Wroxham, it has not been spoilt by the erection of unsightly modern houses for the accommodation of visitors ; for, in spite of its attractiveness, only a very few yachting parties extend their cruising above Wroxham Bridge. In its fine church, quaint old inns, houses with rounded gables, wherry-builders' yards, old malt-houses, charming gardens, well-wooded river reaches, cottage-bordered greens, fine old water-mill, and weather- and water-worn locks, it contains just the features calculated to enhance the charm of a village pleasantly



situated by the riverside ; and in its neighbourhood are enough places of interest to tempt a stranger to make it a centre from which to set out on summer rambles. The river flows close beside most of its picturesque buildings and delightful lawns and gardens, and pursues such a winding course that one might imagine it loves to linger in such a pleasant spot. One cannot help envying its inhabitants, even the humblest of whom has much to make him content, if not in love, with life. And even so long ago as the reign of Henry III the Coltishall folk were eminently favoured, for that king ' granted to all men, women, boys, or girls born, or to be born, in this village of Couteshall, that they should be free from all villenage of body and blood, they and their families in all parts of England ; and that they should not be forced to serve in any offices, for any one, unless they liked it ; and that all frays or transgressions of bloodshed, bargains, and all quarrels and suits concerning the town of Couteshall should be determined every year before the king's officers at the letes there, and the natives of Couteshall should be free from toll by water and land in all fairs and markets throughout England, and from all stallage, poundage, and picage, being the king's tenants '. The granting of this manumission to the thirteenth-century inhabitants of Coltishall was a great favour, for in those days most of the men, women, and children in English villages were villeins or slaves of the lords of the manors, who had the right to dispose of them to whomsoever they pleased.

That Coltishall was a place of some importance even in Saxon times is indicated by the fact that a church was built here before the Conquest. The present church has two small pre-Norman windows in the nave, and some early English work in the chancel. The large water-mill near the locks is not really in Coltishall but in Horstead. It is a fine old building, almost as picturesque as Constable's famous one at Flatford on the Stour ; but, like all the Norfolk water-mills, it has a hidden undershot wheel, the force and fall of the Norfolk rivers not being sufficient to work an overshot wheel. A riverside footpath leads from the locks to Coltishall Bridge, from which Horstead Church, where there is a noteworthy

outer image niche, is distant about half a mile. In another direction, beyond the water-mill, a pleasant road leads to Heggatt Hall, a fine old Tudor house. Other roads lead to Tunstead, where the church has a curious raised platform behind the altar ; and to Stratton Strawless, where, in the midst of woodlands, is one of the most interesting churches in this part of Norfolk. It contains some interesting memorials to members of the Marsham family, among them a fine black marble monument and a cross-legged mail-clad figure supposed to be that of Sir Ralph Marsham, who died in 1250 .

Above Coltishall very few yachting parties care to go, for the eleven miles of river between Coltishall and Aylsham, though pretty, present no feature not to be found on the upper waters of most small streams ; and before Aylsham is reached three locks must be passed through and yachts' masts lowered for passage under no less than seven bridges. Should these obstacles fail to daunt the voyager, he finds at Oxnead some traces of the magnificent Hall which Sir Clement Paston built during the sixteenth century. This Sir Clement, a distinguished naval commander in the reign of Henry VIII, and one who faithfully served Queens Mary and Elizabeth, is described as having been ' a man of great stomach and courage ', who ' took a French galley, and in it the Admiral of France, called Baron St. Blancard, whom he brought into Englande, and kept him at Caistor [Caister] by Yarmouth till he paid for his ransome seven thousand crowns over and beside the spoile of the said galleye ; where among other things he had a cuppe and two snakes of goulde, which were the said Baron St. Blancard's ; the which, during his life, he did upon high daies weare ; and after left the same as a monument to his name '. He is buried in Oxnead Church, where his marble tomb and alabaster effigy can be seen, also a long inscription in verse setting forth his remarkable qualities and brave deeds. He built Oxnead Hall in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In 1676, when it was occupied by Robert Paston, Viscount Yarmouth, King Charles II journeyed to it from Norwich and was lavishly entertained, an immense banqueting hall being built specially for the occasion.

Aylsham, which can be reached far more easily by road or



COLTISHALL LOCK



rail than by river, stands in the midst of a district which has been called the ' Garden of Norfolk '. Formerly it was a place of considerable importance. Not only was the court of the Duchy of Lancaster held within it, but it was, in the reigns of the second and third Edwards, the chief centre of the linen manufacture. Its church, reputed to have been built by John of Gaunt, is of some interest ; but from an antiquary's point of view cannot compare with those of Cawston and Salle, two fine Perpendicular buildings which can be visited from Cawston station. Both these churches have very fine and richly decorated roofs, curious tower galleries, and much heraldic carving. When he has seen these churches, especially noting at Salle a good brass, dated 1440, to Geoffrey Boleyn, the visitor can make a pleasant return journey to Aylsham by way of Blickling, where, on the site of the Boleyn's old home, is one of the finest Jacobean houses in England. The building of this fine old Hall was begun by Sir Henry Hobart, a Lord Chief Justice in the reign of James I ; it was finished by his son. The front of the house, as seen from the road, is very striking, its decorated entrance, surmounted by a clock-tower and flanked by square turrets, being led up to by a wide drive bordered by limes and clipped yews. It now belongs to the Marquess of Lothian, who on one day of the week (the precise day can be ascertained at Aylsham) admits the public to the park and gardens.

So there is something to reward voyagers who ascend the Bure so far as it is navigable ; but as there is the return voyage to be considered, and all yachting parties do not care to confine their Broadland cruising to the Bure, it is, as I have suggested, often better to make the journey from Coltishall to Aylsham by rail. A day can then be devoted to visiting the places of interest just mentioned, and on the following morning the river can be descended as far as the mouth of one of the important tributary streams described in the two ensuing chapters. And after a few days spent on the pretty reaches of the Bure and among the many lovely nooks of the Bure Broad, cruisers will be the better prepared to appreciate the primitive charms of the Broad connected with the Ant and Thurne.



## CHAPTER X

### THE ANT AND ITS BROADS

THE Ant is a river which many yachting parties are unable to explore on account of its shallowness and the small arches of its bridges, so hundreds of pleasure-seekers who cruise in Broadland leave the district without seeing Barton Broad. As Barton is one of the loveliest Broads, this is to be regretted ; but there is no help for it unless cruisers content themselves with the accommodation of a yacht drawing no more than three feet of water. Even then, if not careful, they are in danger of being ' hung up ', for Barton is very shallow except in the wherry channels, and the Ant, which is a very narrow stream, has, even below the Broad, some shallow reaches. When I cruised on this river, I much preferred to do so in my little flat-bottomed gun-punt the *Gipsy*, in which I could sail safely over the Barton shoals and explore many charming nooks inaccessible to even the smallest yachts. But the smallness of a Broadland gun-punt, and its lack of sleeping accommodation, prevent this type of boat being of use to the average cruiser.

It was in the *Gipsy* that I made one of my earliest cruises on the Ant. Starting from Coltishall in the early morning, I loitered some hours among the Bure Broads, so that it was nearly dusk when St. Benet's Abbey came in sight, and I turned into the narrow river I had set out to explore. But on summer evenings the daylight seems loth to leave the open levels ; for a long time after I had passed under Ludham Bridge there lingered an afterglow against which the windmills and distant rising ground were clearly defined. My progress was slow, for the many windings of the river seldom gave me, for more than a few minutes, the advantage of a light breeze that was dying away with the day. Above the bridge the only craft I encountered was a marsh-boat, in which two lads

were crossing from a riverside cottage to a neighbouring mill ; the marshlands were deserted except by the grazing cattle ; cottages and farmsteads were so few and far apart as each to suggest almost complete isolation ; often the only sounds I heard were the rustling of the voles in the hovers and the harsh cries of the restless water-fowl. Gliding silently along, I watched the white mist rising from the water, the white moths fluttering amid the sedges, and the bats—the marshmen's ' flittermice '—flying waveringly along the banks and around the windmills. In a little creek I noticed a clump of reeds gemmed with glow-worms ; not far from Irstead Church, which stands near the river bank a little way below the entrance to Barton Broad, I heard a nightjar churring among the trees.

In the deepening night-gloom little could be seen of the small flint and stone church ; but it is worth visiting in the daytime, if only on account of its associations. For it was of this out-of-the-way parish on the verge of the marshes that William of Wykeham was rector, and a stained-glass window to his memory has been put up in the church. In the days when he ministered to the spiritual needs of the Norfolk marshlanders, whose homes were then being devastated by the ravages of the Black Death, the tall, gaunt Hampshire priest was an almost unknown man ; but when he died, after founding Winchester School and New College, Oxford, the world lost one of its best and greatest men. Fuller writes of him, ' He was called *Long* from the height of his stature, though since it may apply to the perpetuity of his memory, which will last as long as the world endureth.' He stayed but a few years in Norfolk, for there was more important work for him to do than could be done here ; but Norfolk people are glad to believe that he learnt something of the needs of the nation while he dwelt in their county, and they do well to cherish his memory. For, as Dean Kitchen says, ' very few are they to whom God has granted the happiness of being able to achieve so much in their time '. A nineteenth-century rector of Irstead, the late Rev. John Gunn, was a noted geologist, who made the so-called Forest Bed his special study. The rectory formerly contained a fine collection of fossils taken

from that remarkable deposit which comes to the surface along the East Anglian coast. This collection is now in Norwich Castle Museum.

Irstead is the only village closely bordering on the Ant between the Bure and Barton Broad. The entrance to the Broad is a little way above that part of the river known as Irstead Shoals, where the bed of the stream is firm and pebbly. On the moonless night when the *Gipsy* glided on to the wide waters of the Broad it was so dark that the channel posts were hardly visible, and sailing close to the fringing reed-beds I often heard the water-weeds which cover the shallows brushing against the sides of my boat. There were few stars to be seen, for clouds had drifted up from the west since sundown ; a mist that was almost a fog hid the fenny shores. None of the landmarks—the trees, mills, and church towers—which in the daytime serve as guides to cruisers were visible ; shoal water was only distinguishable by its dark patches of weeds and sparse growth of rush and sedge. But the little *Gipsy* sailed safely over the shallows, lifted her sharp bow over the matted water-weeds, and skirted the reed-beds like some large water-fowl seeking shelter for the night. Once she paused a moment, when some stout-stemmed rushes pressed close against her sides ; but she dragged herself from their embrace and soon had a clear course again.

I had hoped to have run up Stalham Dyke and found lodgings for the night at a Stalham inn, but in the darkness I passed the mouth of the dyke without seeing it, and entered unknowingly the channel leading to Barton Staithe. A glimmering light tempted me to draw up at one of the landing-stages, and, stepping ashore, I found a group of marshmen and wherryman congregated on the settles outside a little ' out-licensed ' alehouse, which, however, was closed for the night. Knowing little about Barton—or Barton Turf, as the village is called, presumably on account of its having been largely concerned in the turf-cutting industry—I was uncertain as to whether I would find in the village a bed for the night ; but my mind was soon set at rest. For, in response to my greeting and anxious inquiries, there stepped out of the darkness a genial wherryman, who offered to conduct me to his

brother's house. Gladly accepting, I followed him up the road from the staithe to the village. Half an hour later I was sleeping soundly in as comfortable quarters as I have discovered in Broadland.

I awoke to find the sunlight flooding into my room and the fragrance of flowers stealing in at the window. Strolling down to the Broad, I could hardly believe that a few hours before I had lost my way on it ; but a Barton villager whom I encountered assured me that I was by no means the first person who had done so, and that he himself, after an evening's eel-babbing, had been overtaken by a fog and compelled to spend a night on the Broad. For a fog magnifies a small clump of sedges until it looms as large as a reed-bed, and familiar landmarks seen through the mist assume strange and deceptive forms.

On that bright summer morning Barton Broad was seen at its best. A strong breeze had blown away the night-mists and was making the reeds and gladden bow before it, while wetting their green blades with splashes of spray. Two or three wherries were drawn up at the staithe, which with its old wooden sheds and reed-, rush-, and log-stacks in the foreground, and a cottage or two among trees in the background, looked very picturesque. There was a group of marshmen outside the alehouse, where they often stay all day ; for a marshman by working three days in the week often earns as much money as a farm-hand who works seven, and he prefers to divide his week into equal portions for labouring and lounging. So, at any rate, said the wherryman who had come to my aid the night before, and the loungers did not contradict him. And they only grinned when he went on to remark upon the fact that although when the marshmen went out babbing they invariably grumbled about the small number of eels they caught, there was always a large quantity missing when an eel-box was broken open in the night.

Freed from her moorings, the *Gipsy* was soon scudding across the flashing waters of the Broad, and for an hour or more I enjoyed a most exhilarating sail. There were two or three small yachts cruising up and down the channels, and it seemed to me I was rather envied by their occupants when



they saw my little boat skimming safely over the shallows and along the edge of the reed-beds. A heron seemed indignant at my intrusion into one of his favourite haunts, for when I turned into a little inlet where the white water-crowfoot was in full bloom, the handsome bird rose suddenly within a few yards of me, greeting me with a loud, harsh cry. Then I headed again for the open water, where little wavelets slapped the *Gipsy's* sides and washed over her forward deck. But she shook the water from her like a water-bird after diving, and seemed to revel as much as I did in the freshness of the breeze. In Stalham Dyke, which I entered after this inspiriting sail, the water, in spite of the strong breeze, was scarcely ruffled, for the reeds were well 'up', and in places grew so densely as to keep off the wind. So my progress became a more leisurely one, and I had ample time to admire the lovely white water-lilies for which the dyke is famous. There are people, whose knowledge of Broadland is confined to the more frequented Broad, who assert that the white water-lily is becoming rather rare in the district on account of its being so often gathered by visitors; but if they enter Stalham Dyke at any time during June or July they will have no further fears as to the fate of this lovely flower. For among the large beds of reeds and rushes which now represent the 'grown-up' Sutton Broad, there are acres and acres of water covered with white lilies, presenting a scene of floral loveliness not easily to be forgotten. Growing amid the smooth, dark rushes, the lilies bloom in a green twilight, and the purity of their snowy petals is preserved far longer than is the case when they are exposed to the glare and heat of the sun. It is said that the white water-lily is seen nowhere in greater profusion than in the neighbourhood of Oxford; but I doubt whether even there it attains the size and beauty it does on Sutton Broad.

Much of the land bordering Stalham Dyke has only recently been reclaimed, and even now there are swampy tracts where it is hardly safe to set foot. On these quaking fens the sweet-gale grows, and with it some lovely orchids and the graceful marsh fern. Formerly the royal fern was also to be found here in abundance; but I fear that it has met with the





DRAINAGE MILL ON THE ANT



fate which some have dreaded for the white water-lily. As at Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire, there survive in these swamps many of the old fen flowers which soon disappear from lands which are drained sufficiently to be used as grazing-grounds, and with them linger certain entomological rarities which favour such localities, and which, there is every reason to believe, will be lost to the country when the last of these fenny tracts is reclaimed. On hot summer days little clouds of midges hover over the reeds and sedges; gnats with antennae twice the length of their frail wings alight on the decurrent reed-blades; and butterflies and dragon-flies are seen fluttering and poisoning everywhere. And the wild flowers which these insects and the moths fertilize flourish—the creamy meadow-sweet, the tall cat valerian, the hemp agrimony, the giant willow-herb, the purple and yellow loosestrifes, the meadow rue, and the strangely shaped orchids whose pink and purple spikes pierce the ruddy and golden bog mosses. But such swamps as these flowers grow in in rank luxuriance are rare, and in a few years, unless the sea again breaks in upon the low-lying levels of Broadland, there will be none of them left. Sutton Broad is now a Broad only in name, and several of the Broads marked on old maps of the district have wholly disappeared. Over the sites of some of them the mowing-machines pass, cutting down hay crops where the reeds used to wave in the wind. As time goes on the reed- and rush-cutters will find their occupations gone, and they will have to seek other means of livelihood. This will be no easy matter, for the men of the rivers and marshes do not take kindly to changes. ‘A Norfolk Lament’ in the *Eastern Counties Magazine* well expresses the views of one of them. In it an old marshman is made to say :

They're a sluggin' an' widenin' miles o' the deeks;  
 I reckon the whool mash 'ull sewn ha'e to goo;  
 An' us old mashmen 'ull fare like the freeaks  
 I see last summer at Barnum's shoo.

Paarson say, ' Bill, yew dew narthin but growl!  
 Well, bor! I reckon theer's plenty o' rayson.  
 Whass become o' the flightin' fowl?  
 I never see fifty the whool o' last sayson.

Whass become o' the gre't deeak eels ?  
Shillun a stoon we wuz glad to get for 'em.  
Gone ! with the mallards an' snipes and teeals !  
If ye want any now yew ha' got to sweat for 'em.

Here we have a like complaint to that which the fenmen made about the reclaimers two or three centuries ago. At present, however, there are plenty of reeds and rushes around Sutton ; early in the year the dry banks are almost covered with stacks of them, and laden reed-rafts are continually being towed or quanted up and down the dyke.

In the little town of Stalham there is not much to interest the visitor, but it is a convenient place for Broadland cruisers to take in stores. About a mile from the town, however, is the fine church of Ingham, which contains some good tombs with effigies. Formerly it possessed some very fine brasses, but they were stolen nearly a century ago. This church is of interest because it was at one time made collegiate in connexion with a college or priory of the order of Mathurines. This order, which was founded in the twelfth century, possessed only four houses in England, and the largest of these was attached to Ingham Church, where some ruins of it can still be seen. Its sacrist lived in the parvise over the south porch. The greater part of the church was rebuilt by Sir Miles Stapleton, who also built the priory, and whose altar-tomb is in the chancel. In an arch on the north side of the chancel is the tomb and effigy of Sir Oliver de Ingham, who under Edward III was Constable of Bordeaux and Seneschal of Gascoigne and Aquitaine. From Ingham Church it is about half an hour's walk to Hickling Broad, which, although not more than three miles from Stalham by road, is a great distance by water.

When, the wind having died away, I rowed down Stalham Dyke to Barton Turf, I found, just before entering the Broad, an eel-sett spread across the dyke. The eel-catcher, who was seated in the stern of a small house-boat drawn up on the bank, prepared to lower a part of his net so that the *Gipsy* could pass over it ; but being in no hurry to get back to the staithe, I landed and chatted a while with the lonely fisherman. It was early in the season for sett-working, and very few eels were ' running ' ; but so long as there was a chance

of catching some the old man was quite content to spend the greater part of the night by the dykeside. But he was glad to have company; and finding that, like himself, I was a Norfolk man, he soon grew confidential. We talked about will-o'-the-wisps, or 'lantern men', as he called them, and he said it was ten years since he last saw one; but he could remember the time when they were often seen dancing over the swampy lands which border the dyke. They were, he assured me, a kind of 'morth' (moth), and he knew a man, who lived 'up Wayford Bridge way', who had shot one, 'but he never found it'. In this he was less fortunate than a Barton Turf villager whom I subsequently met, for *he* had seen one in the daytime, and it was like a 'devil's coach-horse' beetle! The end of its tail was its luminous part which it turned up after the fashion of a scorpion! But I fancy that villager was confusing will-o'-the-wisps with glow-worms. The eel-catcher had seen his 'morths' flying about over the marshes. Though not a very old man, he had known the time when Sutton Broad was open water, and he had often heard bitterns booming among its bordering reeds. And again I heard the familiar complaint that there 'worn't no fowl to speak on nowadays, an' sune there wouldn't be eels enow in th' rivers to make it wuth while to use a sett'. But, in spite of all the marshmen say, there were plenty of gunners on the marshes in winter, and I fancy there were quite as many eel-setts worked then as there had ever been.

I learnt that there were still some Hewitts among the Barton Turf marshmen. This interested me, for in Lubbock's time the Hewitts of Barton Turf—that is to say, the men among them—were all fishermen and gunners, gaining a livelihood by methods which Protection and Preservation Acts have to a large extent made illegal. It was, according to Lubbock, one of the Hewitts who discovered a new way of taking tench. He had noticed the sluggish nature of these fish, especially in sultry weather, and believed he could take them with his hands. He tried to do so, and succeeded. First he rowed his flat-bottomed marsh-boat towards the weed-beds where the lusty fish lay close to the surface of the water. Generally there was a small shoal of them, and as he approached



they darted away in all directions. Marking the spot—a bubble bursting on the surface of the water would indicate it—where one of them stopped, he slowly drew near it, then, baring his right arm to the shoulder, gently moved aside the weeds and peered among them until he saw the fish. Having found it, he carefully placed his hand under it, raised it gently but rapidly, and lifted it into the boat, where, says Lubbock, who loved to record such practices of the Broadsmen, it ‘often remains motionless for full a minute, and then begins apparently to perceive the fraud practised upon it’. The main thing to be avoided in this method of tench-taking is, he adds, the ‘molesting’ of the fish’s tail. An experienced ‘feeler’ for tench would easily capture five or six dozen fish in a day; he himself had seen fifteen or sixteen good-sized fish taken in a short time. Hewitt’s success induced other Broadsmen to follow his example, with the result that many of them soon got to prefer using their hands rather than a net in taking tench in shallow waters. Some of them do so to-day; but whether because they thus capture the largest fish, or, because, as Lubbock asserts, the bow-nets are sometimes ‘examined’ (!) before the owner takes them up, I cannot say.

Next morning I returned to the Bure, but on other occasions of my visiting Barton Turf I have spent more time there. The village is a very charming one, as a few outsiders have discovered, for they come and stay there every summer, and its church possesses a screen which some consider superior to that at Ranworth. On its panels are painted sixteen figures; but these, apparently, are not all by one hand, for some are much better done than others. Among the saints represented is St. Osyth, an East Anglian saint seldom seen on rood-screens. She was, according to the monkish chroniclers, a daughter of King Frithwald and Wilburga, daughter of Penda, King of Mercia. She was educated by St. Modeven, who afterwards placed her in one of her nunneries. Exceptional Divine interest was soon manifested in her, for, being sent one day with a message to St. Modeven, and being drowned on the way, the spot where her body lay was revealed in a vision, and she was restored to life after being dead three days. Forced by her parents to marry Sighere, King of the East

Frank Southgate

ENTRANCE TO BARTON BROAD





axons, she seized an opportunity of taking the veil ; and her husband, finding her bent on living a reclusive life, built her a nunnery at Chirk, now St. Osyth, in Essex. This nunnery was plundered and destroyed by the Danes, who, failing to make St. Osyth abjure her faith, cut off her head. Immediately this was done the wondrous martyr took her severed head in her hands and walked to a neighbouring church, where, having knocked at the door, she fell down dead. She was afterwards looked upon as the patron saint of housekeepers, and on the Barton Turf screen is represented carrying keys. St. Apollonia, the dentists' saint, is also represented ; and on a fine screen in the south aisle are depicted the royal saints Olaf, Edmund, Edward the Confessor, and Henry VI. In the vestry two interesting brasses with English inscriptions are preserved. At Beeston, a neighbouring village, the church has a good screen on which, as on that at Belaugh, the twelve apostles are portrayed. The western arm of Barton Broad extends to the bounds of the estate of Beeston Hall, for many generations the seat of the Prestons. Among the heirlooms of this family is an emerald ring given to Jacob Preston by Charles I just before his execution.

Most writers of Broadland guides have hesitated to advise cruisers to ascend the upper waters of the Ant—that is to say, that part of the river which lies between Stalham Dyke and North Walsham—and although the country between Barton and North Walsham contains much that is interesting, and its scenery is, in places, exceedingly pretty, I can commend their hesitancy. For since the railway came to North Walsham and took much of the carrying trade out of the wherry-men's hands only a few wherries have regularly used the river, and parts of it have become almost unnavigable. Even when its channel was quite clear only small yachts could sail up it ; and it has always been so narrow and winding that cruisers in it have generally found rowing or quanting the speedier method of progression. There are, however, signs of improvement. Wayford Bridge has been rebuilt and its arch span widened.

Dilham with its lock and bridge, and Honing with its safe long lane leading to the church, are among the pretty

villages which the cruiser on the upper Ant can visit ; but Worstead, about a mile from Briggate Lock, is more interesting than either of them. For Worstead was once an important town, the centre of a manufacture to which it gave its name and its church is one of the finest in Norfolk. It was built during the most flourishing period of the town's history, and dates from the latter half of the fourteenth century. Its fine tower, 120 feet high, is in the Late Decorated style of architecture, and has some very interesting sound-holes with good tracery. The nave, which is Perpendicular, has a wide hammer beam roof, and is divided from the chancel by a carved oak screen adorned with paintings of saints. The font is Perpendicular, and has an elegantly carved tabernacle cover surmounted by a floral finial. Across the tower arch extends a very fine and perfect gallery, erected at the beginning of the sixteenth century ; the chancel screen is a century older. The screen at the west end is adorned with modern paintings copied from pictures by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The south porch, which has a parvise, is well carved and groined, and the north doorway is interesting. Apart from the church there is little in Worstead to suggest its former prosperity. It is now a village—a very pretty one, but, except for its church, in no way remarkable. Daniel Defoe, however, when he visited this neighbourhood in 1722, was much impressed by it. Between Cromer and Norwich, he wrote, 'are several good market towns and innumerable villages, all diligently applying to the woollen manufacture, and the country is exceedingly fruitful and fertile, as well in corn as in pastures ; particularly, which was very pleasant to see, the pheasants were in such great plenty as to be seen in the stubbles like cocks and hens—a testimony, though, by the way, that the county had more tradesmen than gentlemen in it ; indeed, this part is so entirely given up to industry, that what with the seafaring men on the one side, and the manufacturers on the other, we saw no idle hands here, but every man busy on the main affair of life that is to say, getting money.'

In North Walsham, too, there is a fine church, which, like that at Aylsham, bears the arms of John of Gaunt. It is a Perpendicular building ; but its tower, which, with its spire



rose to a height of 147 feet, is now in ruins. The font has a good tabernacle cover with a pelican for its finial ; and some screen panels, discovered in 1844, when the church was undergoing restoration, have been placed across the aisles and chancel. On the north side of the chancel is the tomb of Sir William Paston, who died in 1608. The effigy on this tomb, the work of a London mason, was set up during Sir William's lifetime ; it represents him in full armour. He was the founder of the local Grammar School, at which Lord Nelson and Archbishop Tenison were scholars. Several of the Norfolk churches contain memorials to members of the famous Paston family, but the finest is in Paston Church, about four miles from North Walsham, where is a remarkably good monument, the work of Nathaniel Stone, to Catherine, wife of Sir Edmund Paston, who died in 1628. In the sculptor's diary the following entry has reference to this tomb : ' In 1629 I made a tomb for my Lady Paston, and set it up at Paston, and was very extraordinarily entertained and pay'd for it £340.' Another Sir William Paston, a judge in the reign of Henry IV, is also buried in this church. Other monuments by Stone are to Sir Edward and Sir Edmund Paston, and there is a brass bearing this inscription :

Here Erasmus Paston and Marye his wyffe enclosed are in claye  
Which is the restinge place off fleache untill the latter daye  
Off sonnes thre & daughters nyne the Lord them parents made  
Ere cruell death did worke his cruell spite or fykell lyff did fade.

Of the Pastons' old home, from which many of the famous *Paston Letters* were written, the only trace is an old farm barn. The house stood not far from the coast, which in the fifteenth century seems to have been exposed to the attacks of pirates ; for we find Agnes Paston writing to her son that the pirates ' have thys weke takn iiij vesselys of Wyntyrtun, and Hapishborough, and Ecles. Men be sore aferd for takyn of me for ther ben x grete vesselys of the enemyis. God give grace that the see may be better kepte than it is now, or ellys it shall ben a perylous dwellyng by the se cost.'

A short distance from North Walsham, on the Norwich road, stands an old stone cross erected to commemorate the Litester insurrection of 1381.

But North Walsham and its neighbourhood can hardly be called a part of Broadland. When Barton Broad has been crossed no Broads of any size or importance retard the seaward flow of the narrow, winding Ant. True, there are a few little pools—all that is left of what were once wide expanses of water—but they in no respect differ from those which vary the course of nearly every lowland stream. Antingham Ponds, in which the Ant has its source, are so shallow and ‘grown-up’ that they are not worth visiting, even if the channel which leads to them were navigable. At no time were they largely visited by Broadland cruisers, and the time cannot be far distant when even such a crazy craft as that in which Mr. Christopher Davies adventured upon them will hardly find open water enough to sink in.

NOTE.—In this chapter some reference to William of Wykeham’s connexion with Norfolk is left as originally written ; but I have recently been informed that this worthy divine was a notorious pluralist, and it is very doubtful whether he ever even saw Irstead, the Broadland parish of which he was rector.



*Montagu's Harrier.*

MONTAGU'S HARRIER



## CHAPTER XI

### THE THURNE AND ITS BROADS

COMPARED with the Ant, the Thurne is a wide river, between Kendal Dyke and Thurne Mouth so deep that the largest Broadland craft can cruise on it. Flowing through one of the wildest and least populated districts in Norfolk, it is undoubtedly the best river for such voyagers who come into Broadland for a restful holiday, and they may be well content to devote the whole of their time to its pleasant waters, its fine Broad, and the wild, lonesome seaboard lying a little way beyond the borders of Horsey Mere. If Broadland consisted only of this river, Hickling Broad, Horsey Mere, and Heigham Sounds, it would be a district unique within the borders of Britain; for while the beauty of the famous Bure Broad is of a kind not confined to Broadland, the charm and loveliness of Heigham Sounds, and its wide, wild marshes, are such as cannot be enjoyed elsewhere in England. In Heigham Sounds we have, as at Rockland, a Fenland mere in its primitive state, such as Whittlesea was ere the reclaimers came and transformed its reedy waters into pastures and cornfields. Almost unchanged in aspect from what it was a thousand years ago, secrets of the early world seem to be whispered still among the reeds; and there are times—as when dusk comes down on land and water—when it seems no hard matter to read them. Surrounded by scenes whose beauty man has done nothing or little to mar—where the handiwork is all Nature's—it is easy for the solitary cruiser to become a primitive child of Nature, a 'summer-saturated heathen', and, in so mingling his identity with hers, to drink in delight from the fountain-head of pleasure. After a few hours spent amid such scenes he may become conscious of a return to primitive simplicity of thought and inclination, of an ability hitherto, even if possessed, un-



exercised, to distinguish the essential from the superfluous, and to rest content with the things nearly every man can claim as his own. And unless he has lost one of the greatest gifts bestowed on man it is possible for him, in a little while, to understand what Thoreau meant when he wrote that he had 'never found the companion who was so companionable as solitude'.

To a district where survives such untarnished loveliness and primevalness, there could hardly be a more fitting portal than the medieval bridge that spans the river at Potter Heigham and which, in part at least, dates from the twelfth century. Up to this point, and for a mile or so beyond it, the voyager's course lies between the widespreading marshes of the West Flegg and Happing Hundreds. On a declivity near the mouth of the river, on the east side, is the little village of Thurne, which gave its name to the stream. The church, which stands on the top of the hill, is a building in mixed styles, remarkable for containing one of the few existing bells made by William de Norwyco, a fourteenth-century bell-founder. A good view of the ruins of St. Benet's Abbey can be obtained from the tower, in which there is a round hole that was formerly, tradition says, used as a 'look-out', through which signals were made to and received from the inmates of the abbey. The nave has a good hammer-beam roof with carved bosses.

On a map of Norfolk by Tacden, issued in 1797, a Broad as large as that at Oulton is marked as being situated near the village: it was called Thurne Broad. All traces of it have disappeared, and Womack Broad, once a fairly extensive sheet of water on the opposite side of the river, seems likely at no very distant time to become equally indistinguishable.

Not very long ago Womack Broad, which is connected with the river by a long dyke, was of fair size; now there is little more than an acre of it—a widening of the channel by which the wherries reach the village of Ludham at its north end. But it still has some pretty nooks and corners where marshmen's boats are moored or a cottage stands near its banks; and it is worth visiting not on this account only, but because Ludham Old Hall, once a residence of the Abbots of St. Benet's Abbey, can easily be reached from Ludham Staithe. Very little of



BELOW POTTER HEIGHAM



the original building is left, for in 1611 it was almost destroyed by fire ; but a brick chapel, which Bishop Harsnet built when the house came into the possession of the Bishops of Norwich, is still standing, and is used as a barn. The village church is a Perpendicular building, chiefly interesting on account of its well-carved screen and font.

Between Womack Dyke and Potter Heigham are two or three fine old windmills, good specimens of the picturesque structures whose work, it is to be feared, will, at no very distant date, be done by ugly brick- or corrugated iron-housed steam-pumps. A spare half hour may be well spent in examining one of these old mills, especially if the millman be present to explain the working of it. The interior is often an eerie place, badly lighted, and care is needed in climbing the steep, ladder-like flights of steps which connect the floors ; but the view from the top of the mill repays one for the climb. The machinery consists of little besides a long, perpendicular shaft and some large cog-wheels ; but the latter look very formidable, being usually without any protective casing, and the racket made by some of the mills as soon as they are set going is simply deafening. Even on calm nights strange noises are heard in the dark chambers—faint sighings, creakings, and groanings, rats scampering over the floors, and birds fluttering among the roof-beams ; so it is easy to understand why some of the mills are believed to be haunted. Some, too, have tragic histories ; for lone millmen, compelled to stay all night in them when a strong wind was blowing and the dykes were filled with flood-water, have been caught and crushed in the great cog-wheels. And tales are told of mills near Horsey and Hickling having been used as storehouses by the smugglers who ran cargoes on the East Norfolk coast.

Potter Heigham Bridge has been for a long time a favourite subject with artists, but its surroundings have changed greatly of late years. For Potter Heigham has become a popular yachting centre, and along the banks of the river, both above and below the bridge, there are now innumerable boat-sheds. The old Waterman's Arms has been pulled down and a new inn built, and it will not be surprising if before very long something is said about building a new bridge. But to remove

the old structure would be a great pity, for Potter Heigham Bridge, with its rounded central arch and flanking pointed ones, is a fine example of medieval bridge-building. A few years ago the village was almost as medieval as the bridge. Then it was that the curious gate-sign of the Falgate Inn bore the lines :

This gate hang high  
But hinder none,  
Refresh and pay  
And travel on

—an inscription which has since been repainted and, by being made grammatical, made commonplace. But this was at a time when weight was attached to the sayings of old Mrs. Lubbock of Irstead, a kind of 'wise woman' or Mother Shipton, who said, 'Blessed are they that live near Potter Heigham, and double blessed them that live in it.' She was an uncanny old woman, this Mrs. Lubbock, for most of her prognostications were of wars and rumours of wars. She it was who stated that 'the town of Yarmouth shall become a nettle-bush'; that 'England shall be won and lost three times in one day, and that principally through an embargo to be laid upon vessels'. 'There is to come,' she added, 'a man who shall have three thumbs on one hand, who is to hold the King's horse in battle; he is to be born in London, and be a miller by business. The battle is to be fought at Rackheath-stone Hill, on the Norwich road. Ravens shall carry the blood away, it will be so clotted. The men are to be killed, so that one man shall be left to seven women, and the daughters shall come home and say to their mothers, "Lawk, mother, I have seen a man!"' Broadland cruisers may find comfort in her forecast that 'bridges shall be pulled up, and small vessels sail to Irstead and Barton Broad'—a prophecy which seems to point to the removal of that awkward obstacle to navigation, Ludham Bridge. But nowadays Potter Heigham moves with the times, and its 'wise women' are those enterprising village housewives who, as they significantly tell you, 'take in' visitors.

A little way above the old stone bridge another bridge spans the river—an ugly iron one, over which runs the coast



railway from Yarmouth to Cromer. Then, on the right, a short distance back from the river, the tower of the ruined church at Bastwick is seen. From this point onward to Kendal Dyke the scenery is, for the most part, a repetition of that of the lower waters of the Thurne; but the natural grouping of the waterside cottages and windmills is, in one or two places, even more picturesque than any to be seen below the bridge. In little inlets in the banks several house-boats are moored; but these do not all belong to the eel-catchers, some being moored here for the convenience of their pleasure-seeking owners. The eel-catchers, however, were formerly much in evidence, and the setts between Potter Heigham and Heigham Sounds were considered to be by far the best situated in the Broadland rivers. For when the eels are 'running', immense shoals of them leave Hickling Broad, Horsey Mere, and the Sounds, and on their way to the sea they must all pass through Kendal Dyke and down the Thurne.

Kendal Dyke in itself differs in no way from many other dykes and channels in Broadland; but there are many men, lovers of wild life and wild beauty, to whom it is, as it were, a water path leading to a natural paradise. It is a waterway along which, if it were possible, every fresh voyager in Broadland should pass unconscious of what is before him; the impression made upon him by a glimpse of Heigham Sounds would then be uninfluenced by previous surmises and imaginings. For it is impossible for either the artist in colours or the artist in words to do anything like justice to this wild wilderness of reeds and water, and so convey a definite idea of it to one who has never seen it. To attempt to do so is trying to describe the indescribable; one can only give one's own impressions, and these, it seems to me, unsatisfactorily. For the average man has no opportunity of coming in contact with the absolutely primeval in Nature; and when he sees something which in a way suggests it, he is at a loss to find words or other means to give expression to his feelings. He has been born too late to have known what England was like before it became what an American writer has called it, 'a well-groomed country'; too late to have known it as a land of wild forests, heaths, and fens. So, when he is suddenly brought into the

midst of a district which wears an aspect borne by a great part of his native land centuries before he became a dweller in it, and which strikes him at first as being crude, untamed, and as it were unorthodox, it takes him some time to get in harmony with his surroundings and adapt himself to their moods.

In Heigham Sounds we have left to us a typical Fenland mere of the pre-reclamation days. In all there are something like 125 acres of water; but at first glance it is hard to believe it, for some of the reed-beds have so increased in size of late years that much of the open water lying beyond the largest pool, through which a channel runs, is hidden. To estimate the size of such a sheet of water is difficult. On almost every side, the reeds, during the greater part of the year, confine the cruiser's outlook, and there are no neighbouring heights to command a good view of the Sounds. Beyond the reeds is a low, flat, fenny country, where rushes and sedges are almost as plentiful as meadow grass. Here and there is a solitary windmill, guardian and preserver of its surrounding marshes. In one direction only is the outlook varied; there a fir copse shows its blue-green foliage above the reeds and against the sky. Everywhere else reeds and water, reed-mace and fen sedge; for of such are Heigham Sounds.

Little enough to rave about, some may say; and if they come to the Sounds expecting to find a pretty Broad, like Ranworth, Salhouse, or South Walsham, they will be disappointed, for there is nothing pretty about the Sounds. But there is beauty, fascination, charm; and if one stays long enough on this watery wilderness he will in time become enthralled. For he will find that almost every day it has a new aspect, a different mood, and that almost every hour aspect or mood undergoes a subtle change. Colours such as he never even dreamt were to be found on Nature's palette will be spread over the rippling water, and will dye the quivering air-films which veil the whispering reeds. Mirages, evanescent and beautiful, will bewilder him at noontide; mist-wraiths, vague and mystic, will haunt him at dusk and dawn. For him the wind among the reeds will make weird music, and at times whisper strange secrets of the early world in his ear. If he have any imagination he will see visions and dream



AT POTTER HEIGHAM



dreams. He will see not only coots, grebes, and herons, which are always around him, but the buzzards hovering over the fens and the ruffs dancing before the reeves among the sedge; and he will hear not only the 'chucking' of the reed birds and the 'chinging' of the titmice, but also the booming of the bittern and the creaking of the black tern. In the eel-catcher rowing his punt towards his sett he will see an old-time Broadsmen spreading his hundred-yards-long draw-net and hauling it in so laden with roach and bream that he can hardly get it on board his boat again. Broadland as it was in the past, before Wild-Fowl Protection and Fisheries Preservation Acts altered the lives of the men of the rivers and marshes, will become as real to him as the Broadland of to-day.

For it was on and around Heigham Sounds that the characteristic wild life of Broadland was most abundant in those bygone days, and it is here that even now it can be studied under more favourable conditions than anywhere else in the district. The bitterns are few, the black terns are gone, and so too are the avocets and spoonbills, the ruffs and reeves; but coots, water-hens, and grebes abound, and among the reeds can still be found that rare and handsome little fen bird, the bearded titmouse. This little bird, it is sometimes feared, will one day be numbered among England's lost breeding birds, for slowly yet surely its favourite haunts, the reed-girt marshland meres, are disappearing, and now that it has become very rare, the gunner, in spite of the legal protection afforded it, seldom spares it. Mr. J. H. Gurney, who has written a valuable and interesting monograph on this species, estimates that there were in 1898 not more than a hundred of these birds left in Broadland, and that of these the greater number frequented Heigham Sounds, where about half a dozen nests were reported to have been built in the spring of that year. In the spring and summer of 1901 they appeared to be fairly numerous among the reed-beds of the Sounds; every time I was there I heard their musical call-note and saw them taking short flights over the rustling reeds. Once or twice in the springtime, before the young reeds were 'up', I caught a glimpse of one of them hanging first sideways and then almost



head downwards on a last year's yellow reed-stalk ; but for fear of disturbing them I did not try to find a nest. It was a sight worth seeing to watch the little acrobat going through his performance.

Mr. Gurney says that ' in its nest and all that concerns the bearded tit the protective colour may be traced. The old cock's black moustachios . . . are like the dark corners in the reeds, and his tawny colouring harmonizes with the brown tints of autumn. Nowhere is the harmony of Nature better seen than in the blending colours of the birds, insects, and flowers of Norfolk Broads, where everything seems made to suit its surroundings. Push your boat into the reeds and lie still, and then a more beautiful object than a cock bearded tit, clinging tail uppermost to a tall reed-stem, gently waving in the wind, it is difficult to imagine. Except in the vicinity of their nests, or when curiosity gets the better of them, they are decidedly shy, and inclined to hide low ; but by their nests they are better to be seen, as they flit restlessly across one mown open space after another, and sometimes in their anxiety for their eggs betray their whereabouts. They become more unsuspecting when they have young, their care for whom causes them to defy danger and go straight to the very nest in the presence of spectators—yet they have instinct enough to creep to it rather than to fly. If there is the least wind, the reed pheasants, as they are called by the natives, are not very likely to show themselves, for, strange to say, what will wave the tops of the reeds will keep them at the bottom. I have been surprised when walking with an old marshman, an experienced egger, to notice how often he heard their note when neither of us could see the bird, long experience for them having sharpened his ear ; but it is not loud at any time, though described by some persons as shrill, and by Stevenson as ringing and silvery. Indeed, Lord Lilford, who was fond of the Norfolk Broads, says its note once heard can never be mistaken for that of any other European bird by a good ear, which no doubt he had. Several authors have alluded to the clear ringing of their call-notes, which an admirer (Crespon) compares to the sounds produced by the cords of a French mandolin.

I shall not soon forget a summer evening I spent on Heigham Sounds. A day of wild weather—of racing clouds, scanty sun-gleams, and sudden rain-squalls—was drawing to a close. The wind had died away, and hardly a ripple disturbed the water's reflections of the reeds and sedges. My boat was moored in a little inlet among the reeds, where my outlook was towards Whiteslea, beyond which some yachts' masts and two windmills stood out clearly against the sky. On the opposite side of the Sounds a pair of swans had fallen asleep, lulled, as it were, by the soft whispering of the reeds. All around, among the reeds, coots were calling harshly; from the marshlands came the crying of some unseen curlews; once a great crested grebe stole out of a reed-shoal and dived within a few yards of my boat. Cuckoos were calling in the old carr where the herons used to build, and were answered by others in a copse towards the Hickling end of the Sounds. As the hour of sunset approached, the coots crept from the cover of the reeds and swam out on to the open water, where they dived for food, undisturbed until the clanking of a rowlock sent them scurrying back to the reeds. Close to the reeds the bream were lurking, sending up little air-bubbles, which burst when they reached the surface of the water; at times a fish leapt half out of the water and sent a gleaming ring of ripples widening towards the shore. As the sun sank behind a long low cloud-bank, another sun seemed to rise towards it out of the depths of the Sounds; but both rising and setting suns soon vanished, leaving on sky and water an amber glow, darkened here and there by grey-green wisps of cloud. Across this band of amber light three herons, which appeared from the direction of Horsey Mere, went slowly winging westward, calling 'frank, frank' as they went. Presently another heron came in sight, flying low over the reeds and water, and in the middle of the Sounds alighted on one of the channel posts, where it stayed a few moments, clearly outlined against the sky.

Whiteslea, though formerly a large sheet of water, is now little more than a fairly wide channel or reedy pool connecting Hickling Broad with Heigham Sounds. The entrance to it is at the western end of the Sounds, a little way to the left of the posts which mark the mouth of the Old Meadow Dyke leading

to Horsey Mere. But Hickling, though its area has decreased of late years, is still the largest of the Broad. Not so very long ago, Hickling, Whiteslea, and Heigham Sounds together formed a Broad about 650 acres in extent ; but the 'growing up' of Whiteslea has resulted in Hickling with its 460 acres and Heigham Sounds with its 120 acres becoming distinct Broad. Hickling at first glance seems even larger than it really is, so low and flat are its shores ; when mist hides its bordering reed-beds its waters appear limitless. The channel across it, from Whiteslea to Hickling Staithe, is marked by a long line of posts, which yachts must keep to starboard ; but there is a branching channel leading westward to Catfield Staithe. Yachtsmen who are familiar with the Broad take care to keep close to the posts ; for the width of the channel varies, and not even the wherry-men are always sure how far from the posts it is safe to venture. Except in the channel, the depth of water is hardly anywhere more than three feet ; even small yachts, drawing not more than two feet, often find their progress checked by shoals and matted masses of water-weeds.

Lacking the wild beauty of the Sounds, Hickling Broad has little to recommend it to summer cruisers. But in the neighbourhood of the staithe there are some picturesque nooks and corners where wherries and old flat-bottomed reed-rafts and marsh-boats are moored in dykes and inlets gay with brightly blooming wild flowers. The small sailing boats, too—which are the handiest boats for exploring this Broad—look very dainty little craft when they spread their white sails and race or tack across the wide waters. Sometimes you may see what look like small haystacks—one, perhaps, with a sail hoisted above it—floating down the channel ; these are reed-rafts laden with hay, which the marshmen are quanting or sailing from the banks of the Old Meadow Dyke to Hickling Staithe. But these characteristic craft are more often afloat in winter, when the reed-cutters are at work on Hickling, Whiteslea, and the Sounds ; then the reed-rafts are continually passing, laden or empty, up and down the Broad. But when sharp weather sets in, and the Broad is frozen, as it sometimes is, for weeks together, the rafts disappear, and even the heavy wherries cannot break their way through the ice. Instead, one or two



SUNSET, HEIGHAM SOUNDS

Frank Southgate





ice-yachts are seen, and maybe a marshman's gun-punt mounted on wooden runners. These glide with amazing speed over the smooth ice, where there is ample room for them, and skaters, as a rule, are few. At such times other bird-voices than the familiar ones of coot and grebe are heard among the reeds—the voices of wild-fowl driven southward from the frozen North. But the 'Hickling Skater', the ghost of the young soldier who used to meet his sweetheart on the Swim Coots marsh on the Heigham side of the Broad, no longer startles the belated skater by dashing past him on the ice ; for that strange wraith has not been seen for many years.

About three-quarters of a mile from Hickling Staithe is the village of Hickling, where there is little of interest except the church. Of the Augustinian Priory founded by Theobald de Valoins in 1185 some scanty remains can be seen attached to a farmstead about half a mile north of the church, but the walls have almost disappeared. Formerly Hickling was a place of some importance ; it was a market town, and in the reign of Henry III was granted an annual three days' fair. Catfield, where is the nearest railway station, is a village about two miles from Hickling Staithe. Its church, a restored Decorated building, contains some good work ; but more interest attaches to the rectory, which was for some time the home of the poet Cowper. Stalham is about four miles from the Staithe, and can be reached by way of Ingham, where are the fine church and the priory ruins referred to in the chapter on the river Ant. An isolated pool called Calthorpe Broad is situated about a mile north of Hickling Priory ; but it is scarcely worth while for a stranger to go out of his way to obtain the special permission necessary before he can see it. Indeed, the visitor whose time is limited does well if he contents himself with a sail across Hickling Broad and then returns to Heigham Sounds. For if he has come straight away from Potter Heigham he will not yet have sailed up the Old Meadow Dyke and seen Horsey Mere.

The Old Meadow Dyke is one of those navigable channels which in several cases connect Broads with the rivers or with other Broads. It is about a mile and a half long, very narrow, and branches off in a north-easterly direction from the Sounds,

near the point where another channel leads from the latter into Whiteslea. In many respects it closely resembles the waterway between the Bure and South Walsham Broad, but it is rather deeper than that dyke, and its course not quite so tortuous. Its water is usually very clear, so that its sub-aqueous weeds—narrow- and broad-leaved pond-weeds, matted thyme-weed, and dark bunches of hornwort—which grow luxuriantly, can easily be seen and identified. On both sides of the dyke are wide stretches of marsh, rather more fenny than those bordering the main rivers. On these marshes, and by the waterside, some rare sedges are to be found ; also some fine tall water-grasses, among them the tall fescue (*Festuca elatior*, Sm.), the aquatic meadow grass, and the purple reed grass. During July, when the meadow rue, willow-herb, and flowering rush are in full bloom, the dyke banks are very beautiful, and the fragrance of the meadow-sweet on sultry days is almost overpowering. In places the waterside flowers attain such a height as to conceal the haymakers at work on the marshes ; they have to be cut down with scythes before the reed-rafts can be loaded with hay. Where such a clearing is made, cruisers on the dyke get a wide view, and see the stalwart marshmen swinging their scythes among the long grass, exposed to the scorching blaze of the summer sun. For on marsh nor dyke is there shelter from the sun-glare, except where the reeds rise high around some narrow inlet, or a reed-thatched cattle shed stands in the midst of the grass and flowers.

As the voyager approaches the Horsey end of the dyke he becomes aware of the presence of a rare feature in Broadland scenery. Before him, in the distance, he sees a long, ragged ridge of maram-hills, the sandy sides of which, when lit up by the sun, stand out in striking contrast with the green of the marshlands in the foreground and the blue of the sky beyond. When he reaches the Mere, he finds these sandhills clearly outlined on the horizon, but little else, except perhaps the salt savour of a sea-wind, to indicate that he is within a mile and a half of the sea. The Mere, though smaller than Hickling and Barton, is wider than Wroxham, the beauty of which, compared with that of this lovely lagoon, seems somewhat commonplace. Like Heigham Sounds, it continually

reveals fresh loveliness and weaves new spells of enchantment. It is an almost circular Broad, fringed with reeds, beyond which, in one direction, is a narrow belt of woodland. Innumerable coots nest among the reeds, and their cries are often the only sounds which break the silence of the placid waters ; for yachtsmen, daunted by the difficulties of the Old Meadow Dyke, seldom visit the Mere, and the only rowing boats seen on it are those belonging to its owners.

With the exception of a private fishing-house on a little wooden promontory almost opposite the mouth of the Old Meadow Dyke, hardly a human habitation is visible from the Mere ; and as a rule the cruiser who visits it finds no one afloat on its waters. This was the case when, in the twilight of a summer evening, I sailed on to Horsey. The little *Gipsy*, gliding before a dying breeze, crept slowly through the water, which, although the sun had set and the sunset's glories faded, still had the sheen of a silver shield. A pale mist almost hid the bordering reeds and magnified the coots on the open water so that they looked like the large gulls seen at night on the Breydon flats. Above the mist, in the direction of Hickling, a tall windmill loomed like a phantom guardian of the Mere. The coots were silent ; not a whisper was heard among the reeds, which the failing breeze scarcely stirred ; not a sound came from the hidden village behind the trees, not a murmur from the sea. The Mere slumbered like a lake in Dreamland, over which the night was drawing a dewy coverlet, white and smooth except where a little islet of sedge and sallow ruffled its filmy folds, and the *Gipsy's* white sail, slackly waving from the mast, swept aside the ethereal gauze. There was something suspensive in the stillness and silence : earth, sky, and water seemed to be breathlessly watching and waiting. Such absolute quietude was almost weird. One could fancy the world so waiting, hushed and awed, for the final cataclysm.

But it was only the calm before the storm. Next morning, when, with little more than the peak of my punt's sail showing above her decks, I ventured out on to the Mere, a wild wind was whipping the surface of the water into white-crested wavelets, and robbing some of the alders and sallows of their as yet green leaves. The sun was shining brightly, except now and again

when, for a few moments, a flying cloud darkened it and cast a shadow on the distant sandhills. Not a coot was to be seen where the evening before there were a hundred ; but over the flashing water some sea-gulls were wheeling, their white wings gleaming in the sunlight. On the marshes the tall grasses tossed and gleamed amid a foam of meadow-sweet, the sheen of their slanting stems suggesting the spears and lances of a hidden army of fays. From every side came the varied notes of the wind's song—from the grasslands a sibilant 'sishing', from the reed-beds a shriller symphony, from the sallows a whistling of lashing wands, and from beyond the sandhills and the deep-breathing woodlands the incessant roaring of the surf on the shore.

Landing near the entrance to the Old Meadow Dyke, I strolled along a marsh wall leading to the nearest windmill. At times, when wind-gusts swept down upon me, I could hardly make headway ; at every stile and marsh gate I was glad to rest a while and regain breath. Nowhere along the footpath was there shelter from the furious blasts ; and at length I abandoned the path and trespassed on to a swampy marsh lying a few feet below the wall. There, as there was no chance of further cruising until the storm moderated, I wandered amid waving tufts of white cotton-grass, and sought for sundews on the brilliant-hued patches of bog moss. I could not find them ; but there were beautiful little pink-belled bog pimpernels trailing over the moss, adder's tongues sending up their slender spikes, thistles nodding their purple heads, and moneyworts creeping amid the grasses and sedges. Fragile eyebrights hid amid the long grass, where, too, the tiny starwort lurked ; but the straggling purple-blue marsh pea was conspicuous in several places, and there were signs that the lovely Grass of Parnassus would soon be in bloom. Among the fragrant spiraeas a swallow-tail butterfly fluttered, and innumerable five-spotted burnets were abroad in spite of the wind ; but most of the insect life of the swampy marsh lurked among the sedges, grasses, and bog moss. There, in a dense jungle of stems, blades, leaves, and blossoms, thousands of minute beetles and ephemeral midges were living their little lives, never venturing out of the green twilight of their marsh

HAY-BOAT ON HICKLING BROAD

Frank Southgate







underworld. They had their enemies, animal and vegetable, but the wild wind left them as undisturbed as it did the inhabitants of the depths of the sea.

Returning to the wall, I met a marshman on his way to the mill. Talking of the weather reminded him of the November gale of 1897, when the sea broke through the sandhills and overflowed the Horsey marshes. 'If yow'd ha' sin th' sea come in,' he said, 'yow'd ha' thowt we wor all a-goin' to be drowned. It come in acrost th' Warren for nigh three hours—till th' tide went out; an' if it hadn't ha' bin for th' deeks bein' pretty nigh empty at th' time, I don't know what would ha' happened. An' mind yow,' he went on, 'sich a thing never ought to ha' happened. There's th' Commish'ners; it's their bisness to luke arter th' merrimills, an' if they'd a-done it as they should ha' done, th' sea 'ud never ha' got tru. Kapin' th' sea out ain't a one-man-an'-a-boy job, as some o' th' Commish'ners fare to think 'tis. Why, there was one Commish'ner he say tu me, "What's wantin' is plenty o' faggots." Says I to him, "Sir, there wor faggots enow all riddy to be used long afore th' storm come, but no one was tow'd to use 'em." "Ah," he say, "that was werry wrong; it ought to taach us a lesson." Says I, "Some folks take a daal o' taachin'," an' he larfed; but, thinks I, it ain't no larfin' matter. But *he* didn't own no land out this way; *his* property wor all out Norwich way. Another man what come to hev a luke round when th' mills wor a-clearin' th' deeks fared a sight more consarned about th' fish bein' killed by th' salts than he did about anything else. "Shockin'," he say, "shockin'!" "That 'tis, sir," says I; "some o' us mash folk stand a gude chance o' being drowned if suffin ain't done." "Ah," he say, "that 'ud be werry sad, but I wor a-thinkin' about th' fish"!' "

After leaving the marshman I rowed back across the Mere, having a hard struggle to reach the entrance to the narrow reedy dyke leading to the staithe and the big turbine pump-mill. I then rambled down to the village, formerly, before the road to Somerton was made, one of the least accessible by land on the East Norfolk coast. The church, which is only a few minutes' walk from the Mere, contains a fifteenth-century screen and some old poppy-head benches.

Shortly after midday the gale moderated, but there was a strong breeze blowing when I again crossed the Mere and entered Waxham Dyke. This dyke, sometimes called the New Cut, is a very narrow channel leading from the north side of the Mere northward to Waxham and Palling. Until lately it was in a very neglected state, owing to the wherries having temporarily ceased trading with Palling ; but a revival of the carrying trade has led to its being bottom-fyed, and it is now possible for shallow-draughted yachts to follow in the wake of the wherries. When I last sailed up the dyke, however, the bottom-fying had not been completed, and just beyond a rough driftway leading to the hamlet of Waxham a dam was placed across the dyke, barring further progress towards Palling. So, leaving the *Gipsy* in the hands of a millman whose mill and cottage stand on the bank near the bottom of the driftway, I set out for a stroll towards the coast.

At Waxham the sandhills rise to an impressive height, constituting a barrier through which it seems impossible for the sea to break. Standing on their summit, one sees stretching towards Horsey on the one hand and Palling on the other a long, serrated ridge of sand hillocks, rising in places to a height of fifty or sixty feet. But high as is this ridge, its breadth, compared with that of the denes or dunes between Yarmouth and Caister is inconsiderable, and so insubstantial are its sandy slopes, that every exceptionally high tide scours away tons of sand. Inland lie wide levels of marshland, shimmering in sun haze or checkered with light and shade. They have been won from the sea—won by a process largely natural—but the sea seems bent on winning them back again. For the character of the coast has changed since the days when the lowlands were reclaimed. Then, the wearing away of cliff promontories to the northward resulted in the forming of natural sand-barriers lower down the coast ; now, the promontories are gone, and the wave-scour is felt to the southward, where, whenever a strong wind from the westward swells the sea-tides, the sandhills are weakened. Old landmarks are disappearing ; Eccles church tower, which a few years ago stood amid the sandhills about two miles from the Town Gap at Happisburgh, is gone, just as the village went that once clustered about its

walls. Thousands of acres of land, too, are gone into the sea, which, unsated, continues its incessant siege. Sea Breach Commissioners make feeble attempts to withstand this siege, but the enemy is far too strong for them. Their successes in the past were chiefly due to the assistance of natural forces ; their failures in the future—for everything seems to point to failure—will be through lack of that assistance. Lyell, in his *Principles of Geology*, suggests that the protection afforded by the sandhills can be only temporary. ‘ Hills of blown sand,’ he writes, ‘ between Eccles and Winterton have barred up and excluded the tide for many hundred years from the mouths of several small estuaries, but there are records of nine breaches, from 20 to 120 yards wide, having been made through these, by which immense damage was done to the low grounds in the interior. A few miles south of Happisburgh, also, are hills of blown sand, which extend to Yarmouth. These dunes afford a *temporary protection* to the coast.’ And again, after dealing with the reclamation of the marshlands, he remarks, ‘ Yet it must not be imagined the acquisition of new land fit for cultivation in Norfolk and Suffolk indicates any permanent growth of the eastern limits of our island to compensate for its reiterated losses. No delta can form on such a shore.’

Waxham is now only a small hamlet without a boat on its beach ; formerly it was a considerable village, with large tracts of cultivated land extending eastward beyond where are now the sandhills. These lands belonged to the Hall, an old home of the Wodehouse family, a member of which, Sir William Wodehouse, who lived here in the reign of James I, is said to have been the builder of the first wild-fowl decoy constructed in Norfolk. Near the ruined church, a short distance from the sandhills, from which it can best be seen, stands the Old Hall. It is now a farmhouse, much altered and modernized, but it is surrounded by its original turreted wall, in the midst of which is a square, pinnaced gateway. Traces of fine old doorways and windows, of good carved work, and of a paved pond, are still to be seen ; and the Wodehouses’ old barn, said to be the biggest in Norfolk, quite dwarfs the dilapidated church standing beside it. An ancient inhabitant of a neighbouring cottage climbed through a gap in the sandhills while

I looked down towards the Hall. 'Ah', he said, 'that's a place as has seen some changes. They say as how there used to be miles an' miles o' land betwixt that owd Hall an' th' sea.' Local tradition may exaggerate the acreage of the land the sea has encroached upon since the Hall was built, but no one can doubt that the old house has seen some changes.

A straight road on the landward side of the sandhills leads from Waxham to Palling, a little fishing village, which if the visitor has patience and plenty of time to spare, can also be reached by the New Cut. The road journey, however, is one of a very few minutes, and as a pleasant stroll back to Waxham can be taken along the sea-shore it is perhaps preferable. Palling, with its quaint old cottages, drawn-up yawls and beach-boats, and roads and footpaths leading down to the beach, is a typical Norfolk coast-village. Its beachmen are considered to be very expert boatmen, and the frequency with which they have rendered aid to vessels driven on to the dreaded Hasboro' Sands has gained them an enviable reputation. Among the men to be encountered at the village inns and on the beach are some who, when their characteristic reticence has been conquered, can tell stirring tales of wreck and rescue.

A well-known writer of powerful but pessimistic romance has suggested that the time is close at hand when the orthodox beauty of smiling champaign country and the obvious loveliness of many famous landscapes will cease to appeal to thinking humanity, who will find the severe simplicity of heathland scenery and the 'chastened sublimity of a moor' in greater harmony with their moods. When that time arrives, he adds, places like Iceland may 'become what the vineyards and myrtle gardens of South Europe' are to us now, and Heidelberg and Baden will be 'passed unheeded' as we hasten 'from the Alps to the sand-dunes of Scheveningen'. When the time this writer considers imminent arrives, the attractiveness of such a line of sandhills as lies between Waxham and Palling should be fully appreciated. At first glance these sandhills seem barren and dreary; and one might well imagine that the seasons' changes have no effect on them, that they are impervious to the influence of spring showers, summer sun, and winter frosts and storms. But the field botanist knows that on





HORSEY MERE



these apparently barren ridges the rose-tinted sea convolvulus blooms, and close beside it the prickly sea holly, the pink-flowered rest-harrow, and the yellow-horned poppy. And even the rambler who is not a botanist finds a certain fascination in the long line of broken ridges—a fascination like that of a bleak moor or barren mountain-top. The irregular outlines, like those of a mountain range in miniature, seen against the dawn-light or sunset's golden glory—or, perhaps, looming through a mist of rain or wind-blown spray—are singularly impressive. In the twilight, when the hillocks' sloping sides are in the shadow, but the sparsely grassed crests are clearly defined against an afterglow of daylight, the sandhills assume a primeval and even awesome aspect, yet one which attracts and appeals more than simple loveliness.

After cruising on Hickling Broad, Heigham Sounds, and Horsey Mere, the voyager may perhaps be disappointed when he sees Martham or Somerton Broad, the only other Broad connected with the Thurne. This was formerly a fairly large Broad, but its open water is now inconsiderable. To see it the yachtsman must ascend the Thurne about two miles above Kendal Dyke. Should his yacht draw much water, however, he will do well to moor it in the neighbourhood of Martham Ferry, which he passes a little way above the dyke; for the narrow channel by which the Broad is reached is often so weed-choked that only rowing boats can pass through it. The Broad is surrounded by dense reed jungles, in which the black-headed gulls have often nested. Westward are marshlands stretching away to Heigham Sounds and the Old Meadow Dyke; northward and eastward, too, are marshes; but southward the land rises gradually towards Martham, whose church tower is the most conspicuous feature of the landscape.

Not far from the south-east corner of the Broad is the village of West Somerton. In this village the celebrated Norfolk giant, Robert Hales, was born. He belonged to a family of giants, each member of which was over six feet in height. He himself stood 7 feet 6 inches in his stockings, and weighed 452 lbs. In 1848 he was engaged to go to America in company with Tom Thumb at a salary of £800 a year. His family was until recently represented in the village

by some stalwart farmers and farm-hands. But the chief attraction West Somerton has for cruisers is the fine series of mural paintings discovered in the parish church during its restoration in 1867. The largest of these paintings, depicting the Day of Judgment, is thus described by Mr. T. H. Bryant in his valuable work on the Norfolk churches: 'Our Lord is represented seated, with the globe beneath His feet, upon a rainbow; . . . but of the figure of Christ nothing but the feet remain, one of which has the mark of the nail. The central upper portion of the painting had been destroyed at some time, when part of the nave was rebuilt. On either side of our Lord is a seraphim presenting to Him a kneeling figure. The one on His right hand, perhaps the Virgin, bares her bosom and holds her right hand to her breast, as if pleading her maternity; lower down are two angels, habited in albs and wearing the usual type of angelic crowns, summoning the dead to judgment, the right-hand angel being [the] more distinct, his trumpet having a cross-engrailed banner upon it. Below are eleven more or less nude figures, rising in various attitudes and with varied expressions of countenance. Amongst them are a king and queen, mitred and tonsured ecclesiastics, and two knights, whose sharp-pointed bascinets suggest *circa* 1350 as the date of the picture. St. Christopher occupies a space on the south side of the nave; he is represented holding in his right hand a staff, and bearing the Infant Saviour upon his left arm. Opposite, upon the north wall, and enclosed within a border of decorated work, is a small painting of the Resurrection; this has faded somewhat, but the figure of the Lord is represented habited in a green vesture, stepping out of the sepulchre, holding in His left hand the cross-banner of the Resurrection and His right in the attitude of benediction. One of the soldiers' bills is lying upon the ground fairly distinct. There are also representations of the Entry into Jerusalem and the Flagellation. Indications exist of the walls having once been covered with paintings.' The church also contains a Perpendicular pulpit and a bell cast by Thomas Belyeter at the Lynn Foundry in the fourteenth century.

Two other churches, Winterton and Martham, are well

worthy of the attention of the visitor who devotes some time to exploring the surroundings of Martham Broad. Winterton is a coast village about a mile east of West Somerton ; with its church, a fine building in mixed styles, the yachtsman who has cruised on the Thurne Broads will for some time have had a distant acquaintance, for its tower, about 125 feet high, is a striking feature of the wide view obtained from any slight rise in the neighbourhood of Hickling, Heigham, and Horsey. On closer acquaintance, however, the south porch proves to be more interesting than the tower, though unfortunately its fine carvings are much mutilated. Daniel Defoe, who visited Winterton in 1722, remarks upon the dangerous character of the coast between Winterton Ness and Yarmouth, where, he says, the cottage-garden railings, the pig-sties, barns, stables, and sheds were all built of ships' timbers, ' the wreck of ships and ruin of mariners' and merchants' fortunes '. And he goes on to tell how, in the year 1692, during a terrible storm, two hundred ships and a thousand lives were lost off the coast in one night. A lofty lighthouse, from the lantern of which a good view of the neighbouring Broads can be had, warns the seaman off this treacherous shore.

Martham can be visited from the Broad, but is more easily reached by the road from the ferry above Kendal Dyke. It is a large and pleasantly-situated village, famous for containing the finest church in the Flegg Hundreds. This church is a splendid Perpendicular building, built at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The windows, some of which contain old stained glass, are particularly interesting ; the font is good Perpendicular ; and the south door is decorated with some fine medieval carvings. The chancel was rebuilt and the nave restored in 1855 at a cost of £8,000 ; this was done as a memorial to the Rev. Jonathan Dawson of Rollesby Hall. There was at one time a chapel in the south aisle dedicated to St. Blithe or Blida, the wife of Benedict and mother of the farm-hand Saint Walstan, who was born at Bawburgh, near Norwich. St. Blithe was probably buried in a Saxon church which stood on the site of the present one, and when the latter was built her tomb was embodied in it.



In 1522, Richard Fuller, a Norwich tanner, gave ten shillings towards the repairing 'of the church at Martham, where St. Blithe lyeth'. The church register contains some curious entries. In 1619, 'John Smyth, servant to Nicholas Cootes, brocke his legge at the footbaull, one the 6 day of ffebruary being Sunday, and was buried the eleaventh day of the same month'. The 'footbaull' at which this unfortunate man was injured was probably a camping match played on a Sunday. Another entry states that a certain woman had two children at a birth 'which, through the mistake of two or three good old women, were baptized Edward and Robert when the aforesaid Edward was a daughter and Robert a son'.



WAXHAM OLD HALL FROM THE SAND-HILLS



## CHAPTER XII

### ORMESBY, FILBY, AND ROLLESBY BROADS

IN the days when those Norse Viking raiders whom the early English historians indiscriminately call Danes established a considerable settlement in that East Anglian district now contained in the Norfolk Hundreds of East and West Flegg, there lay, between what are now the Hundreds, a large arm, extending northward and eastward of the estuarine valley of the Bure. Into that wide arm or bay the Norsemen brought their ships, leaving them safely moored on it or drawn up on its shores, while they founded a little colony in the neighbourhood by taking possession of the homes and holdings of the Saxon dwellers on that isolate island tract which lay to the north of the entrance to the great East Anglian estuary. They had little difficulty in subduing the land. The Romans, who had built strong fortresses to guard the mouth of the estuary, were gone; the Saxons of this part of East Anglia, probably few in number and knowing little of warfare, were unable to resist invasion. To a seafaring folk like the Norsemen the district offered many attractions. In every direction bays or inlets ran up into the land, not unlike—though very much smaller than—those which fretted the rugged coasts of their native land. On the banks of these inlets they could easily establish themselves, exist on the fish which abounded in the estuary and the wild-fowl which flocked to its swampy shores, and disregard the threats of any Saxons who may have been able to retain possession of the higher lands in the heart of East Anglia. They were practically secure against attack; when they manned their warships and set out on raiding expeditions into the interior of the countries of the North Folk and South Folk of East Anglia, it was scarcely necessary for them to leave any of their fighting men to guard the homesteads they had built or seized. That they held the

island district of the Fleggs some considerable time, seems probable, for they have left their mark upon it—the names they gave their settlements are borne by the Flegg hamlets to-day. In the names Rollesby, Mautby, Thrigby, and others are embodied those of Norse sea-kings; and Ormesby is in all probability derived from the Norse 'orm', a serpent, a name the Vikings often gave their ships.

When the mouth of the great estuary narrowed and the swampy lands of the Broadland valleys became comparatively firm and dry, the 'orms' bei' or ships' bay was separated from the main channel of the Bure valley waters except in so far as it was connected with it by the dykes which drained the new lands formed between Stokesby and Flegg Burgh. As in the case of Fritton, the bay became a land-locked lake, which gradually decreased in size until its area was less than 1,000 acres. It then stretched from the borders of Thrigby to those of Hemsby, spreading out arms in several directions, and in places narrowing and shoaling so that horsemen could ride through it. In course of time, bridges, led up to by raised causeways, were built over these narrow shallows, and the lake was so divided into what are practically three distinct Broad. But although the northernmost of these Broad is called Ormesby, the southernmost Filby, and the middle sheet of water Rollesby, even the natives of the district, not excepting the owners of the Broad and the lands adjoining them, can give no definite information as to their precise limits. Indeed, some writers affirm that there are in reality seven Broad adjoining one another, namely, Old Burgh, Filby and Burgh, Filby, Water Lily, Rollesby and Ormesby, Waterworks, and Hemsby Broad. But if every inlet or arm were to be called a Broad, and every sheet of water were to receive a different name from each of its adjoining parishes, the list of Norfolk Broad would be a formidable one.

For years it has been the dream of certain Broadland cruisers that 'one day some one' will make the Muck Fleet navigable and so make it possible for yachts to sail from the Bure to Filby Broad. But year after year passes, and nothing is done; nor is it likely that the riparian owners will ever



consent to a scheme which, if it were carried out, would result in Ormesby becoming as popular with yachting folk as Oulton and Wroxham are to-day. In all probability visitors to Ormesby, Rollesby, and Filby will always have to content themselves with journeying to these Broad's in the prosaic manner of road and rail travellers, and when they go afloat on them it will be in the somewhat antiquated rowing boats on hire at the inns.

The scenery of these Broad's is pleasantly varied. The shores are well wooded; there are quiet creeks not unlike those of Barton, islets fringed with fen sedge, willow-herbs, and purple-topped marsh thistles, swampy tracts redolent of water-mints and bright with purple and yellow loosestrife, underwoods garlanded with honeysuckle and white bells of the great convolvulus, gardens where handsome peacock butterflies flutter among Canterbury bells and hollyhocks, and bays beautiful with white water-lilies. The reed- and rush-beds are many acres in extent; their varied greens in summer and amber and tawny hues in winter are among the most striking effects visible from the open water. Coots and grebes are abundant on Filby and Rollesby; the woods are full of crooning pigeons, and during the summer months the reeds are musical with warblers. In winter, large numbers of wild-fowl visit the Broad's, especially Filby; but the shooting is preserved.

To explore the Broad's in one of the boats on hire for the purpose is somewhat difficult, for the bridge-spanned channels connecting them are very shallow, often having less than six inches of water in them; and the boats are too heavy to be easily dragged under the arches. Attended by such difficulties, a day's pleasuring becomes tedious and wearying. Less laborious and far pleasanter it is to content oneself with seeing one of the Broad's. The visitor who does so misses little, for the three chief Broad's possess no marked distinctive features; having seen one he may rest assured that he loses nothing by leaving the district without seeing the others. Unless he be an angler, he is unlikely to become enthusiastic over either Rollesby, Ormesby, or Filby. For the Trinity Broad's—as they are sometimes called—lack that wild beauty

which is the great charm of Barton, Heigham Sounds, and Horsey, and their prettiness, when all has been said about it, is of too commonplace a kind to help to extend the fame of Broadland.

Perhaps the most enjoyable way of spending a day in this district is to devote an hour or two to the Broads and the rest of the day to exploring the neighbouring hamlets. If the visitor does this his time will be pleasantly and profitably occupied. Most of the villages bordering the Broads are picturesque and primitive. The churches of some of them are of considerable interest ; and at Caister, about midway between Yarmouth and Ormesby, there is a ruined castle, which, in spite of the ravages of time and the vandalism of Yarmouth trippers, remains a fitting monument to one of Norfolk's famous men. From Ormesby Broad it is not far to the church of Ormesby St. Michael, or Little Ormesby—a building in mixed styles, standing beside the road leading to the station. This church is perhaps the least interesting in the district ; but the parish can boast that, among several families which, about the year 1630, left it for the New Hampshire and Massachusetts settlements, were the ancestors of the famous American statesmen, Daniel Webster. The church of Ormesby St. Margaret, or Great Ormesby, is more worthy of attention ; for, in addition to having some curious bosses on its roof, it contains a brass to Alice, the second wife of Sir Robert Clere and aunt to Queen Anne Boleyn. For a long time this brass was kept in the parish chest ; but it is now, I believe, refixed in the matrix of its original stone, lately discovered in the chancel. There are frequent references to the Clere family in the *Paston Letters*, for the Cleres held several manors in this neighbourhood at the time when the Pastons held Caister Castle. Sir Robert Clere's tomb, which is without an inscription, is near the north window of the church ; and some traces of the family's coat of arms can be seen on the font. The south doorway is good Norman work. The manor on which the Hall stands anciently belonged to the Ormesby family, a member of which, Gunnora de Ormesby, was the mother of Alice Perrers, the mistress of Edward III. Great Ormesby village is prettily grouped



ORMESBY BROAD AUTUMN



around a tree-shaded green. It was formerly a place of some importance—a market town whose inhabitants were exempt from serving on juries, from contributing to the maintenance of knights of the shire, and from ‘theolony, stallage, cumrage, pontage, pennage, picage, murage, and passage’. But in spite of all these privileges it is now a comparatively unimportant village. Where there were at one time five churches there is now only one.

A by-road branching off southward from the Ormesby road where it skirts the village green leads to Mautby, a parish bordering on the Bure. Here again we come in touch with the Pastons; for Margaret Paston, whose letters are the most delightful in the famous collection, was a daughter of John de Mauteby, who held the manor in the middle of the fifteenth century. Undeniably, it is Margaret Paston who gives life to the *Letters*, which, although invaluable to students who would acquaint themselves with the conditions of life in England during the reign of the kings of the houses of York and Lancaster, would be somewhat dry reading if it were not for her love for her lord and careful guardianship of his interests. Her fond love for her children, too, is often manifested, though there are times when we may think her mercenary if we fail to understand the customs of the age in which she lived. For instance, she writes to her ‘right worshipful husband’ as follows: ‘I was at Norwich this week to purvey such things as needeth me this winter; and I was at my mother’s, and while I was there, there came in one Wrothe, a kinsman of Elizabeth Clere, and he saw your daughter, and praised her to my mother, and said that she was a goodly young woman; and my mother prayed him for to get for her a good marriage if he knew any; and he said he knew one . . . the which is Sir John Cleys’ son, that is Chamberlain with my Lady of York, and he is of age eighteen years old. If ye think it be for to be spoke of, my mother thinketh that it should be got for less money now in this world than it should be hereafter, either that one or some other good marriage.’ From this epistle it might be imagined that Dame Margaret considered mutual love an unessential adjunct of matrimonial contracts; but elsewhere she reveals a kindly interest in a



love-sick maiden. Writing to her son, Sir John Paston, who was probably with King Edward IV at Pomfret at the time, she says, 'I would you should speak with Wekis [Wykes, an usher of the King's Chamber], and know his disposition to Jane Walsham. She hath said, since he departed hence, but [unless] she might have him, she would never marry, her heart is so sore set on him; she told me that he said to her that there was no woman in the world he loved so well. I would not he should jape her, for she meaneth good faith.' But, like a careful matchmaker, she is anxious that her young friend's matrimonial prospects should not be entirely marred by this usher who loved and rode away, for she adds, 'If he will not have her, let me know in haste, and I shall purvey for her in other wise.' Then the careful mother shows herself, for she goes on to say, 'As for your harness and gear that you left here, it is in Daubeney's keeping; it was never removed since your departing, because that he had not the keys. I trow it shall get injured unless it be taken heed to betimes. . . . I sent your grey horse to Ruston to the farrier, and he saith he shall never be nought to ride, neither right good to plough nor to cart; he saith he was splayed, and his shoulder rent from the body. I wot not what to do with him.' This letter was conveyed to her son by the rector of Filby, as appears from a postscript: 'I would you should make much of the parson of Filby, the bearer hereof, and make him good cheer if you may.' Delightful Dame Margaret! Her gentle wrath seems to haunt the meads of Mautby and the ruins of her Caister home. She was buried in Mautby Church, in accordance with the instructions of her will, in which she desires to be interred 'in the aisle of that church at Mawteby, in which aisle rest the bodies of divers of mine ancestors,' and that under a 'scutcheon of arms' should be inscribed the words, 'God is my trust.' Her tomb has vanished with the south aisle in which it stood; but there is still to be seen a marble tomb and cross-legged effigy of Sir Walter de Mauteby, one of her ancestors, who died in 1248.

Within the bounds of the parish is a boat ferry on the Bure. It is called Mautby Swim, being one of the spots where cattle used to swim across the river to and from the marshes.

Adjoining Mautby is Filby, a village on the main road from Yarmouth to Norwich. Its church, which has a fine Perpendicular tower, with figures of the four Doctors of the Church for pinnacles, overlooks Filby Broad, and is only a few minutes' walk from Filby Bridge. A belfry door with seven locks, some painted screen panels, and a fine west window, are its most interesting features.

Nearly a hundred acres of Rollesby Broad are situated in the united parishes of Burgh St. Margaret and St. Mary, now known as Flegg Burgh. St. Mary's Church is in ruins, and of little interest ; but St. Margaret's contains some good Norman work. The lordship of Burgh St. Margaret was granted by King John to Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent—that same Hubert whom, in Shakespeare's play, the king, when he would have him murder the youthful Prince Arthur, addresses thus :

O my gentle Hubert,  
We owe thee much ; within this wall of flesh  
There is a soul counts thee her creditor,  
And with advantage means to pay thy love :  
And, my good friend, thy voluntary oath  
Lives in this bosom, dearly cherished.  
Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say,—  
But I will fit it with some better time.  
By Heaven, Hubert, I am almost asham'd  
To say what good respect I have of thee.

Adjoining Flegg Burgh is Clippesby, where the church contains two good brasses, one of which Cotman calls 'one of the best and most pleasing' in the county. It is on the tomb of John and Juliana Clippesby, and is dated 1594.

But the historical interest of the neighbourhood of the Trinity Broads chiefly attaches to the ruins of Caister Castle. This castle, one of the oldest brick houses in England, was built by Sir John Falstolff, the cost of its building, it is (very incredibly) said, being defrayed by the ransom money received for a French noble whom Fastolff captured at Verneuil or Agincourt. Its builder was a Norfolk knight, a famous soldier, and a much-maligned man. He was a prominent leader in the wars of the reign of Henry V, and for his gallant conduct at Harfleur, Agincourt, and Verneuil had honours heaped upon

him ; but he was called a coward because at Pataye the troop under his command, panic-stricken by what they had heard of the supernatural powers ascribed to the Maid of Orleans fled in disorder before the Frenchmen. ' From this battell says Holinshed, ' departed without anie stroke stricken, sir John Fastolfe, the same year for his valiantnesse elected in the order of the garter. But for doubt of misdealing at the brunt the duke of Bedford tooke from him the image of St. George and his garter ; though afterward, by means of friends and apparent causes of good excuse, the same were taken from him againe deliveryd against the mind of the lord Talbot. Shakespeare, in *King Henry VI*, makes a messenger from the battle-field of Pataye say that, through the bravery of Talbot the battle would have been won by the English

If sir John Fastolfe had not play'd the coward :  
He being in the vaward, (plac'd behind,  
With purpose to relieve and follow them,)  
Cowardly fled, not having struck one stroke.

And again, by Talbot, Fastolff is charged with being ' dastard ' ; while the king calls him ' stain to thy countrymen '. Holinshed based his charges on Monstrelet's account of the battle, and Shakespeare credited Holinshed's statements ; but in the *Chronique d'Angleterre*, written by Waurin who was present at Pataye, it is confidently asserted that the battle was lost through Talbot's foolhardiness, and that Fastolff fought until it was plain to every one the English were defeated.

The Fastolffs held lands at Caister early in the fourteenth century ; but we hear nothing of their having a residence here before the reign of Henry VI, when Sir John built Caister Castle.<sup>1</sup> He was then an old man ; but he seems to have lived in great state in his new home until 1459, when he died and was buried in a chapel he had founded in connexion with St. Benet's Abbey. At his death the castle came into the possession of John Paston ; but Thomas Mowbray, the powerful Duke of Norfolk, asserted that ' Sir John had given him

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly they *had* a house here before the castle was built, for Sir John was born here.



THROWING THE CAST-NET





Caister, and that he would have it plainly'; and in 1469 he laid siege to the castle. Its defenders numbered only twenty-eight, but they seem to have made a gallant defence. In the end, however, 'from sore lack of victual and gunpowder', they were compelled to surrender. Lengthy legal proceedings ensued. Margaret Paston, in a letter to her husband, writes, 'My Lord of Norwich said to me that he would not abide the sorrow and trouble that you have abyden to win all Sir John Fastolff's goods. But the duke retained possession until his death, when the king confirmed John Paston's right to the estate, and until 1599 the castle was the chief seat of the Paston family. In that year they removed to the fine Hall Clement Paston had built at Oxnead. Sixty years later the castle was sold to William Crowe, a son of the builder of a fine old house at Yarmouth, now the Star Hotel. Crowe, who was a wealthy merchant, is said to have used it as a country residence. After his death it was allowed to fall into decay.

In its original state it was a large quadrangular building, containing, besides the state apartments, twenty-six large rooms. It was surrounded by two moats, the inner containing the greater part of the buildings of which there are ruins remaining, the outer a college which, though founded by Fastolff, was not erected until the Pastons' time. The chief entrance—a square, ornamented gateway—was on the west side. The principal remaining portions are the north and west walls, and a circular tower, about ninety feet high, at the north-west corner of the quadrangle. These ruins are surrounded by the inner moat. Of the outer moat there are no traces; but some walls and a small round tower embodied in a house adjoining the ruins undoubtedly formed part of the castle, and, with the college buildings, were contained within the outer moat. Visitors' scrawlings on the walls have done much to disfigure them; but in spite of this Caister Castle is one of the most interesting ruins in Norfolk. Seen as it is against a background of fine trees, growing beyond the moat, its tower and walls are strikingly picturesque.

Caister formerly had two parish churches, but of one of these only a portion of the tower remains. The other, a building in mixed styles of architecture, stands just outside

the village, beside the road leading from Yarmouth to the Castle. It is of little interest except for the fact that its churchyard contains the tomb of Sarah Martin, the philanthropic seamstress to whose memory a window is erected in Yarmouth parish church. Of the Roman station which, with Burgh Castle, guarded the entrance to the East Anglian estuary, nothing remains, but its site is pointed out on a hill north-west of the church, where a Roman kiln and pavement and several skeletons have been unearthed. That the camp simply consisted of earthworks seems probable, for no remains of masonry have been discovered.

## CHAPTER XIII

### WILD LIFE ON BREYDON

BY ARTHUR HENRY PATTERSON

LOCAL history, more or less traditional, has handed down to us a reasonable assumption that, as recently as the time of the Roman occupation of Britain, the site on which Great Yarmouth stands to-day was shifting sand, entirely submerged. Some nineteen centuries ago a great arm of the North Sea rippled its tides and ruffled its waters right away to Horning on the Bure, Reedham and Norwich on the Yare, and Beccles on the Waveney. Potter Heigham may have been an island, also Caister-on-Sea, and *Garianonum*. An ancient map—ages old, the property of the Corporation of Great Yarmouth—plainly depicts these natural outposts as dominating islands of the sea. The Romans encamped on the sloping dry land that was still licked by the sea-waves, and built there a protecting wall—a ‘fencing’ of such bricks as are not made to-day, intermixed with flints—that stands to this day and will defy the assaults of men and climate for centuries to come.

When Yarmouth’s site arose out of the sea, those sea-rovers the Saxons and Norsemen visited the Fleggs, and, taking a great fancy to our sandbank, established themselves here. Nature then was still sending southward the drift sand, and the gaps between the islands grew smaller, and the waters gradually narrowed, while the silt from the higher land raised the lower levels, and as Charles John Palmer, our historian, states: ‘Cobholm [island], now comprising an area of twenty-seven acres, was formed by an accumulation of mud and silt washed down by the river, which gradually consolidated until it became dry land.’ The contention between the sea’s flood-waters and the ebbs of the Yare and Waveney made Cobholm, which borders on Breydon’s south side.

It may be interesting to add that until the fifteenth century Cobholm Island was continually overflowed. In 1481 it was 'let to Robert Ashton for four shillings a year.' In 1578 'the Corporation appointed a Committee to inspect Cobholm Island ; and report whether it should be maintained by fencing it against the inroads of the waters, or whether it should be left to chance'. The 'fence' was, of course, the same as stands to-day—a kind of sea-wall, which the Dutch term a 'dyke', built up of mud from the Breydon side and from the soil on the inner side. The trench, which ran continuously at the base of the 'wall', formed an excellent conduit for the drainage of the marshes.

What a desolate place must have been this Cobholm—as recently as 1769 the home of the black-headed gulls, and favoured of curlews, dunlins, herons, and black-tailed godwits, with many other species of the rarer interesting birds. In that year, according to Palmer, one Syllas Neville, evidently an all-round sportsman, went on a shooting excursion in this swampy area by boat, and, according to an entry in the diary he kept, 'After dinner hired Samuel Smith and a boat to go a shooting in the marshes up Breydon. We had very good sport, killing many reeves [and probably ruffs], redshanks, and green plovers [lapwings].' He undoubtedly consorted with a race of cocked-hatted, pig-tailed Breydon gunners, for he acknowledges having haunted the old Breydon 'Bowling Green' inn. Wrote he : 'I went with Walker to the Bowling Green on the quay.' This was dated 1771. There can be little doubt that the fowlers' and fishers' boys made excursions for eggs and did other mischief in those days of scanty schooling, if one may judge them by the youth of my own early days, who were following in the footsteps of their Breydon sires.

On some of the marshlands where clumps of wild rushes still crop up we get some idea of what morasses there must have been centuries ago. To-day the marsh levels, and even the foundations of many Yarmouth streets, are below the level of high water. I have seen more than one wall-break, when the surging waters rushed in and flooded marshes for long distances, making the lower rooms of houses uninhabitable. Our raised river banks and more powerful modern pumping



Frank Southgate

PUNT-GUNNERS' HOUSEBOATS ON BREYDON





apparatus have saved us from inundations for a number of years.

It has been thought necessary to touch upon Cobholm because the processes to keep clear of the waters there were much the same as are resorted to to-day in keeping Breydon properly confined, as well as the rivers that drain the county and the Broads. I have a great respect for Henry VII, for he took a great interest in the drainage of the lowlands, and probably was not a loser by it ; he was a good sport and loved to let loose his falcons in the St. Benet's Abbey district. My old poacher friend ' Scarbro' Jack ', however, would have none of him, insisting that he did not play the game. Said he, in hinting at his own aristocratic ancestry (?) : ' They hunted along o' the ancestors of Henry the Seventh, the greedy, weasel-faced ole warmin' that we read of who was so mingy that he used hawks instead of weapons, rather than properly follerin' up his game, like a poacher, on foot.' With regard to the Corporation Committee already referred to, one wonders whether this august gathering was not the precursor of our present-day River Commissioners, who now have charge of our waterways.

As part of their duties the marshmen who live scattered about the vast marsh levels have to keep an eye on the dykes (ditches) and walls, to patch weak places, and, if necessary, to set their mills to work to pump surplus water into the rivers ; whilst the watching of the Breydon levels comes also within their province. The mills have for generations added an interest to the outlook, and have often caught the eye of the artist. Of late years some have fallen into disuse, and steam-power has supplanted them. Probably the latter may cost as much for upkeep, but it has the advantage of working at all times, whilst mill-sails have to wait for the wind. The diagram will give the reader, at a glance, the whole system of the drainage mills.

An extensive series of ' walls ' zigzag about the rivers and the windings of Breydon. There are main ' deeks ' feeding the mills ; these are fed by innumerable cross-cut ditches, and the last-named by narrow, spade-deep trenches which help in the removal of water. The marshes have naturally settled



DIAGRAM SHOWING THE SYSTEM OF MARSH DRAINAGE

- |                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| A. Depth of Marsh Dyke.   | D. Water-Wheel.     |
| B. Marsh Level.           | E. Steam Pump-Mill. |
| C. Section of River-Wall. | F. Sluice-Gate.     |

and to some extent solidified, to the great detriment of many species of birds that used to nest in the swamps and feed on their molluscan and crustacean life, being driven off Breydon when the flats were covered by the tide, to flock back again when the water fell. To-day the fewer curlews, redshanks, and certain other waders, with large flocks of gulls, resort, at high water, to the marshes, often whitening the levels while they preen and sleep away the time till tidefall.

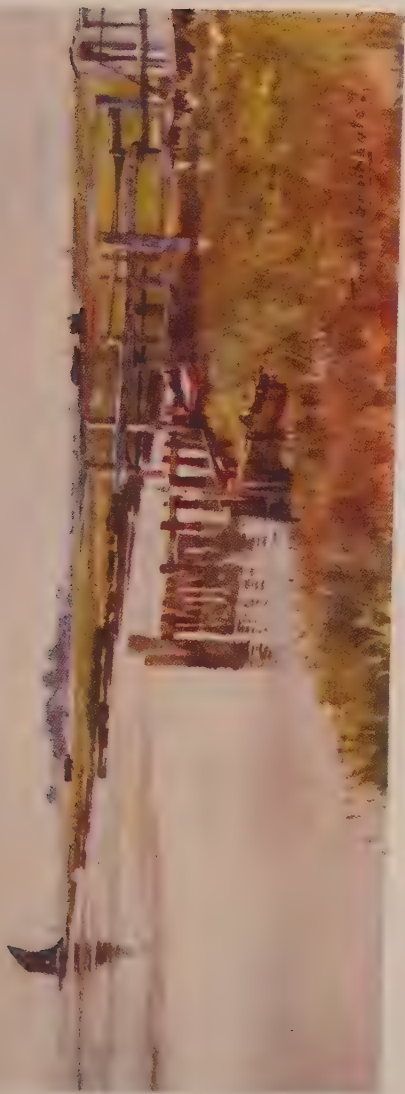
The south side walls of Breydon have been recently strengthened by concrete and flint-stones, thus minimizing the constant erosion that takes place owing to the continual lapping of the tides, roughened by the wind, which licked out the soft clay and mud between the bare, loosely-packed flints and so weakened the structure. I have a recollection of two or three wall-breaks, when abnormal tides rushed through the breaches and flooded many acres. Once two flood-tides broke in without an ebb between. On such occasions worms turned up in myriads and perished, when gulls and lapwings trooped in to gloat and glut themselves with a none too savoury although welcome repast. After one such break the outlook was like a sea, with ditches hidden deep below. On the tide's retirement dead roach and small pike were found scattered everywhere, to the delight of the hooded crows and gulls that dropped in from all quarters, guided hither by a telescopic eyesight or by some mysterious method of deduction known only to themselves. Yet another inundation carried landward through the gap many whittings and flounders that for a time remained alive in the 'salted' ditches after the marshes had been freed of water. Owing to such floods as these the life of a marshman is not only a variegated but also occasionally a perilous one.

Upon the ronds to-day grow coarse rushes; a hundred years ago, when freshets were the rule and salt flood-tides the exception, the common reed (*Arundo phragmites*) flourished on either side right away down to the confluence of the Bure and Breydon. These afforded an excellent cover for men and boats, with always a sufficiency to float them, to lie in wait for flight time. The men had a kind of unwritten code of laws and conduct. It was a great offence, which sooner or

later resulted in retaliation, for a late-comer to go beyond the early-hidden fowlers ; and equally culpable for one fowler to shoot at birds that came to feed within the recognized area of a fellow-gunner. To-day the reeds have vanished, and out of the banks grows the spreading white goosefoot (*Chenopodium alba*), whilst a lessening quantity of sea southernwood (*Artemisia maritima*) springs up in great bunches here and there, and the sea aster (*Aster tripolium*), in lively green patches topped with golden and purple bloom, and honey-scented, give gay variety as summer merges into autumn. On the fragments left of the ronds this aster is scattered thickly around, and wild bees and other insects seek eagerly the sweetness they evidently discover in the flowers. On the north side of Breydon, half-way up the walls, and below them on the landward side, grows the curious little sea milkwort (*Glaux maritima*), with its pretty pink flowers freckled with red spots, which peer at the passer-by from among the harsh, short grasses and as near to the ditches as possible. There, too, in the springtime, the ronds are thick with sea scurvy-grass (*Cochlearia officinalis*) ; and on dry wall-tops, growing scantier every year, is found the narrow-leaved pepperwort (*Lepidium ruderale*). It is my favourite of all wild plants, for in my early days, before I carried a gun, I was wont to proceed on foot along the walls and to throw myself into a bed of pepperwort in order to watch the birds at feed and play. To this day its aroma conjures up all sorts of visions of boyhood's days, when Breydon was still the Mecca of fisher and fowler.

But Breydon is not as it was in the earlier half of the last century. Then some of the flats which are now barely covered at high water were safely sailed over by wherries, while others that are now long dry on the ebb were almost always under water. And there are drains and runs that have opened in late years and deepened several feet in a remarkably short period. The late Mr. W. S. Everitt assured me that in his middle life he had sailed his yacht across Breydon, making one of the ronds his mooring-place, and she kept afloat at all times of the tide. I myself have sailed over the flats in a shrimper's boat, her bows ploughing a way through the massed fronds of *Zostera*, which were swept apart on either side of us, as one





BREYDON ROND



might wade through a field of barley. To-day most of those flats are often as bare of water as they are of the once-abounding 'widgeon-grass'. In the north-east corner of Breydon was an oozy patch known as 'Rotten Eye' from its bogginess, and in my time I have found it safest to carry an oar there, for one went in down to the knee at every step. To-day it affords as firm walking as the other flats. The last time I attempted to get past the rond referred to, on the top of a moderate tide, I had to push my punt with a shoving-pole. The moist mud was smothered with silken 'mat-weed', which, with the 'sea-lettuce', had superseded the dwindling *Zostera marina*, the widgeon-grass of the old fowlers, and which formed the favourite feeding-grounds of the mallard and widgeon. Where the flats are frequently dry, the glasswort, here called samphire, freely crops up.

In the days referred to a semi-amphibious fraternity, provided with boats, nets, and guns, earned a moderate and fluctuating livelihood here all the year round. There was always enough depth for them to work their nets or to get within reach of sleeping or feeding wild-fowl. To-day, when ducks are in evidence, a gunner, with all his manœuvring, will often fail to get within shooting distance of them. Then the upper parts of Breydon, more especially towards the 'Fleet', were rarely too low of tide to prevent the eel-spearer or 'babber' exercising his craft. The eel-picker would push through the waving *Zostera*, stabbing at every likely place for a victim threading the massed fronds in search of mollusca, small shore-crabs, and the fry of fishes; or he would closely scan each clear bit of mud below the surface, not seldom 'spotting' a large eel's head peering out of one aperture of its 'burrow' and the end of its tail sticking out of another. A stab between head and tail might result in the hauling out of a fat pounder or even heavier fish. One old Breydoner, known as 'Limpeny' King, was keen on these holes and would throw his short-shafted pick with the accuracy of a Zulu hurling an assagai.

Grey mullet revelled in fairly large shoals at times among the *Zostera*, their quest probably being small periwinkle-shaped molluscs known as *Hydrobidae*; and undoubtedly small fry and crustaceans were also a lure. It was a rare thing to

capture mullet except by net ; but I remember a young fellow catching a rather fine example with a common naked mussel. Occasionally a shoal found themselves in a dilemma, as at Oulton Broad, where they entered the lock ; and instances are known of their being taken with a kind of spear kept for the purpose. Mullet are careful to draw off the flats as the tide falls, to rollick and wallow in the deeper runs and drains. The Breydon men were always keen to catch them ; and the eel-babbers who gave information of their presence—usually at the ‘ Bowling Green ’ tavern—hurriedly made ready the nets and staked them at the edge of the drains, thus intercepting their return. A bold fight they made to escape, rooting on occasion beneath the nets, and, if in a draw-net, some would leap the corked line that held up the net, and sometimes a whole shoal would so escape.

In the old days there was much lowly life upon and in the softer muds, which in later years have dried and hardened by long exposure to the sun. The wet flats were alive with ragworm and small red *Nereidae*, for which the long-billed godwit and smaller-mandibled dunlin and knot searched and probed. The fronds of the *Zostera* were necklaced, as it were, by myriads of tiny molluscs, and *Gammarus* and *Idotea*, of various species, gyrated among them. It was common practice as late as the early ‘nineties for boys to go ‘winkling’ when the ebb-tide had left the water-weeds prone. I have waded barefoot with a baling ‘scuppet’ to collect in a little while enough winkles to cook for tea. We had no petrol in those days, and far less sewage diversion into the rivers. Small cockles burrowed in the sandier patches ; so did the curlew after them, with its sabre-shaped mandibles. Among the larger, disgustingly flavoured clams (*Mya arenia*) were the smaller sort, *Scrobicularia piperita*. The curlew knew it better than it did its awkward name. Mussels at one period were a paying quest, and when the drains had run low could be found in big clusters attached by their *byssus* threads to shelly bottoms—the valves of long dead clams ; also to the flint-stones that wherry-men, when sailing to the opposite side of Breydon with these stones for wall-mending, sometimes threw in in big lumps. Under proper conditions of salts and freshets,

had there been erected the *bouchot* system, such as obtains in France, there might have been fairly good earnings made when other channels of income had become temporarily closed.

But what of the ruder element, then known as 'Breydon Pirates', who robbed eel-trunks at night and the timber yards when a 'flick' was wanted to patch a 'strake', or a fellow-fisherman who had left his butt-nets standing on the edge of a flat, and gone home to fetch provisions or fill himself with good cheer at the 'Bowling Green' inn or the 'Staff of Life?' When writing of Breydon men I have always remembered their antecedents and upbringing and the good old command to 'Let the dead bury their dead'.

Every tide carries a number of tiny dead, and often living, shells, which collect in heaps in corners or at acute bends in the walls, carrying on in miniature the processes that have formed the Craggs of prehistoric times, when, as now, the eddies piled up the Craggs.

It is an interesting leisure-day occupation to drift about in a punt, which must not be manned by any one ignorant of Breydon, to watch the muds that in many places seem alive; *Corophiums* fret the surface and the keen-eyed dunlins and ringed plovers pounce upon them; opossum shrimps (*Mysis chamaeleon*), and one or two others of the *Mysis* family, gather in water-filled holes and round the posts, to the benefit of various commonplace little fishes; for these, too, with common shrimps, flounders, smelts, gobies, blennies, and small eels eagerly hunt. Among and under weeds and other light flotsam hide shore-hopper and sand-hopper, and these the turnstone or 'tangle picker' throws over and pushes with its 'chest' in order to disturb and snap them up. A quartet of turnstones (*Strepsilas interpres*), busily picking, singly or sometimes in unison, are manœuvres well worth watching.

Shore crabs, for which neither eel-potter nor provider of food for Yarmouth folk ever sought, abound—in France they condescend to eat this crab (*Carcinus moenas*)—but at Wells and in its neighbourhood the children gather them by the bucketful for the big tub in the boiling-house, from which store they are drawn upon to be smashed for baiting the whelk-pots. They were ever a pest in the light-meshed smelt-nets,



and, while protesting against their entanglement and interference, the smelter always vindictively killed them by a nip of the centre of the shell and broke off their legs. When other provender is scarce, large gulls sometimes may be seen marching in a broad line, turning over the weeds, and snatching up with avidity each crab they find. Crabs that are foolish enough to scamper on the muds near the walls are eagerly sought for by the scurvy, ill-favoured rats that burrow in behind these mounds. And does not the curlew delight in little crabs, the sweeter if shell-moulted and softish! First he shakes the creature, which throws off its legs in so-called terror, and then he gleans up each fragment before tackling the body, if that body be small enough to enter his rather narrow gullet. The crabs are out for food as well. In a little trickle of water, perhaps, you may find one chasing bewildered shrimps left by the tide. If the water be shallow enough, and you throw over broken smelts or other waste fish, you may observe the crabs running, stopping, starting to run again, always keeping up the scent, and you may also note that those below are unaware of the feast their fortunate comrades are enjoying.

Two other crustaceans are noteworthy, neither of them indigenous residents of Breydon, but there merely by accident of tidal movement, namely, the so-called 'Jack Shrimp', in reality a sturdy prawn known as *Leander longirostris*, which, when boiled for eating, becomes ivory white. It was undoubtedly the prawn known to Sir Thomas Browne as delighting in the 'mixed water' at St. Olaves, and was beloved of great perch that came to feed upon it. The other is the 'ditch prawn' (*Paelomon varians*). This little fellow lives in the slightly saline marsh ditches, and is frequently drawn down through the opened mill-sluices into the rivers and Breydon. Here they have a lively time endeavouring to avoid hungry flounders and other fishes that eagerly pursue them.

The fish-life of Breydon has decreased considerably in recent years. The salmon has for a long time only occasionally ascended this basin, although odd fishes have gone upstream to Norwich, but could not get beyond the foul waters at the New Mills. Sir Thomas Browne records, in 1662, fifteen of these noble fishes at Trowse Mill. Salmon-trout, which in summer



SMELT-FISHING, BREYDON



are freely netted off Winterton, also wander now and then up the winding Yare, probably actuated by an instinct inherited from their parents of ages long gone by. Before sunrise I have seen a salmon-trout fling itself out of the sea, and it has been known to do so on Breydon, though here, probably, through distaste for the acids and sewage stinging its gills. The grey mullet has already been mentioned. Some of the old Breydoners carried with them a little bunch of straw when after mullet. Sprinkled on the inner side of the net when fish were surrounded by it, this appeared to stop attempts at flinging themselves over the corks. Hustling with an oar upon the water behind the net also kept them from endeavouring to escape. I have known the osprey and cormorant to visit Breydon, and, perched on the channel stakes, look for prey ; but I could never really prove that they sought the grey mullet. Flounders satisfied the osprey, and eels the cormorant. A record mullet scaled 9 lb. in weight. The grey mullet, that at one time were so interesting a feature of Breydon, were undoubtedly lured there by the low forms of marine life that clung to the bottoms of old wooden vessels which had plied the Mediterranean ; they followed such ships into dock, still pursuing, and when the pumps had ceased were often found kicking in the emptied dock and were captured by the 'gravers'.

Flounders are locally known as 'butts', which term was used by the river authorities when they annually visited Hardley Cross to meet the Norwich deputation in order to measure, with brass-flounders, the meshes of the nets so that undersized 'butts' should not be illegally disposed of ; the eel-setts, then much in use on the Yare, were also inspected. These fisheries were of great importance, for fish of the sea were not then so much sought after. The frolics that attended the inspection were accompanied by 'play of fyfe and drums, and sweetly singing'. The baritones of the rough Breydon and river men must have put the tenors of the feebler throats far into the background.

On Breydon staked-nets and draw-nets were used for flounder capture, as was the butt-dart, a rake-like instrument, with tines running vertically with the shaft or pole of twelve

to sixteen feet in length for use in the main channel, but which ran to nine feet only for a lighter dart used in the drains. In August the 'grass-fed butts' waxed fat upon shrimps and other crustaceans; in frosty weather—in January in particular, when the flounders from the sea wriggled themselves under a layer of silt and sand in the channel—very large, roe-filled fish were taken. On a keen frosty day, on a slow ebb, I have brought up fine fish, which froze stiff as they lay in the boat, while the trickling of water down an eighteen-foot shaft has frozen until I could scarcely grip it. Young flounders are beloved of herons, as are eels, which they patiently await to swim within range of their dagger-like mandibles.

The eel was the great mainstay of the Breydon folk. Eel-babbing and spearing filled in the summer months, when birds were few. The men who went babbing were very particular about the worms, preferring the tough old 'blue-nosers' to others of a more tender species. It was odd to see here and there a babber pouring salt water from the river among the pebbles that had for years been used to pave the market at Yarmouth. Tiny tufts of grass sprang up between them, to be weeded out once a year by the Corporation's men. In a great hurry the worms came to the surface and were delicately handled by coarse fingers and dropped into dry earth in an old tin—a handleless saucepan for choice. Into a tub the worms were then shot, to mix with previous captures. They were threaded by a long, thin wire, and to this was attached three or four yards of worsted or thread, shoemaker's hemp by preference. Inserting this torture needle into the tail end was the easier process, for if started at the head the poor beast writhed so that the wire protruded here and there; the other way, with the head part dependent, it was promptly impaled. The two ends of the thread were then tied together and the 'necklace' wound round the hand and then tied again so that the loops were kept in order. A cone-shaped lead sinker was attached and the baited weapon was ready. The stupefied worms were tenderly placed on a cabbage-leaf in a safe place until the punt or scallop had reached the fishing ground, either on Breydon or that once noted eely haunt the 'Beccles River', and when a mile or so up it operations began. The bab was



fastened to the line, the line to the rod, and 'bobbing' commenced. Sometimes eels bit madly ; at other times they bit but did not 'hang'. Dodging from place to place the babbers found out where the eels were gathered, for even they had their fancies. Moonless nights were favoured. Sometimes a few pounds of small eels were taken ; at other times the weight ran to a stone or two. Easterly winds meant but small catches. This *modus operandi* does not make pleasant reading, but such were the facts, and they have rarely been described in cold print. In the early morning the several boats were rowed down to the eel-merchants and the eels were bought for the London market. It was not a little amusing to watch the men count over and over their varying earnings with the very small knowledge of arithmetic at their command.

One eventide a loquacious old Breydoner had prepared an exceptionally fine bab, and was congratulating himself on the weather portents as he rowed nearly up to Acle, only to find that the rhubarb-leaf with its miserable tenants was missing. He had forgotten to put it on board. Those who heard his bitter comments long remembered them.

The biting of an eel at a bab is altogether different from that of, say, a bream, which usually gently lifts the bait, making the float rest flat on the water. An eel gives a pluck, often letting go as the line is lifted ; a good bite is announced by a vibrant shake, the eel having seized the worms and its teeth being well shut upon the hemp or threads in a worm. At a bite the babber swiftly lifts the line and swings the eel over the well of the boat, where it lets go. You may sometimes hear the leaden weight hit the bottom-boards two or three times before an obstinate eel will let go. A splashing or slapping follows as the eel worms its way beneath the floor. It was a queer sight to see a hundred eels slithering around when the floor-boards were lifted, and it was a weird experience to be drifting around among the unseen fishermen, whose position was noted only when a match was struck or an extra strong draw at a pipe stirred up a red glow in a smoker's pipe-bowl. It was entertaining, too, to listen to strange questions and stranger answers in the local dialect.

In winter the eels had not all gone down to the sea. Many

had burrowed into soft spots and holes in deep water, where longer shafts and heavier spears often brought to light fine saleable fish. Jack Gibbs, who plied both pick and punt-gun, once struck a 13½ lb. conger that gave him 'the time of his life' to get it safely ashore. Here and there an eel-man gave more heed to his eel-pots; these were wicker baskets with a funnel-shaped entrance and with a back exit that was kept tightly closed with a large cork. These were fastened to a long line at intervals, well baited with shrimps from the shrimp boats. The eel-man went back in the early morning to fish up the line with a drag-hook, for he had more or less secretly dropped in his gear the previous night. Were all men honest he would have tied one end of his line to a Breydon stake.

Occasionally a shrimp boat ventured up Breydon in mid-summer with a small trawl-net, for fine soles are often found to have followed the tide. Even to-day, in winter, good catches of flounders are made by the shrimpers' trawls in Breydon main channel, and they find a ready sale in the local shops.

The capture of one particular species, the smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*), was a popular pursuit with several Breydon men, and a noted family, the Burgesses of Burgh Castle, for many decades, one generation after another, went in quest of these fishes. Their tarry huddle of house-boats were landmarks, as well as snug retreats while waiting for the tides, for they were moored in little gaps at the mouths of the Yare and Waveney. The smelt comes regularly up river in spring to spawn, descending later in the year to the sea again. Norwich fishermen, when the waters were still moderately pure, pursued these fish at night-time by the light of torches, using a cast-net. The net lay in folds on the left arm, and was suddenly thrown out so as to make a big circle. Being weighted with leads the bottom meshes quickly closed, encircling every fish within its radius, while the cord which made the apex was still held in the smelter's right hand. I have seen this net used on Breydon, but for many years it has fallen into disuse.

The smelt-net proper was a fine-meshed seine from eighty to a hundred yards in length and small meshed. On going to a favourite spot, either at the beginning of the flood or near its

ending, when the tides were slack, one man stepped ashore with the line, the carefully stowed net running out as the rower in the boat started on his half-circular row round ; the floats above and the marble-sized leads below kept the net upright. When the two men were on the mud they slowly came together as the net was drawn into a lessening circle, and when within a foot or two of the flat the ' bight ' was suddenly pulled ashore with its kicking victims. Once in a while all that was drawn in might be a bundle of seaweed and one or two small flounders. To ' go a tide ' with a couple of smelters is an experience that excites boy and man, scientist and shore-loafer.

When the time is over for fishing, the fish, which have been carefully laid in rows in shallow flat boxes, are transferred to smaller receptacles holding two or three score, according to size, and as carefully packed as bloaters would be. The boxes are hurried to the railway station, and are put under the auctioneer's hammer next morning at Billingsgate. They fetch from two to three shillings a score, according to size and quantity. During the war the two or three boats pursuing the smelts realized as much as eight shillings a score, and then a capture of from twelve to twenty score fish well repaid the pursuit of them.

Many species of sea-fish are netted at times with the smelts—for example, the viviparous blenny (*Zoarces viviparus*) or ' eel-pout ', a sturdy fish running to ten or eleven inches in length. The local name is well applied, for it looks very like a cross between an eel and an attenuated codling. It is excellent for the fry-pan, its bones turning to emerald green in the cooking. Once in a while a five-bearded rockling (*Motella mustela*) is netted ; this fish has a still greater resemblance to the hybrid suggestion just referred to. Sticklebacks, washed through the sluice-gates, as well as so-called ' whitebait '—young herrings—come in with the seaweed. Small bass (*Labrus lupus*), flounders, and others make up a very respectable list. One small species, very like a cross between a herring and a smelt, now and again visits Breydon in some numbers. In Lowestoft harbour the small ones abound in the visiting season, when young and old—mostly interested visitors with tiny hooks and minute portions of shrimps—capture many of

them, more for the fun of it than for the table, for they are tasteless and bony. When dead their remarkable silvery sides become more intensely bright, as if burnished. They are the atherine (*Atherina presbyter*), locally known as 'smolts'. It was a common saying with the Breydon men, 'Lots of smolts, few smelts'. These two fishes do not mingle from choice, and it is probable that the peculiar cucumber-like aroma emanating from the smelt is disagreeable to the atherines. One might imagine that the smelts resented the appearance of the smarter visitors. It is possible the two species have good reasons for these vagaries.

There has been installed recently a large water-pipe running from the riverside across to the electric lighting station. Through it pass thousands of gallons of both fresh and salt water daily, according to the tides. Pumped up with the water are many small fishes that must temporarily use the riverway, many entering the vortex by venturing too near the piles. There is a necessary grating over the mouth of this conduit, but small fishes pass through it easily and are quickly drawn up into the filtering tanks. So many interesting species were noted—such as gobies, blennies, suckers, 'whitebait', small dabs and flounders and the like—that a small aquarium, with a pipe trickling water through it constantly, was placed in a corner of the structure. Among the more interesting visitors have been greater and lesser sandlaunces and common and deep-nosed pipe-fishes, while now and again a florin-sized brill and turbot, smelts of varying sizes, eels up to a pound in weight, and infant lumpsuckers the size of an acorn are in evidence. A month or two later these last-named come in and swim leisurely around, grown to the size of walnuts, which they greatly resemble in shape and roughness. They are emerald green in colour.

There came into the tank early in 1930 two species new to the county, viz. a couple of carmine-coloured ribbon-fishes (*Cepola rubescens*) and two small Baillon's wrasses (*Crenilabrus melops*). The advent of these rare fishes is a slight indication of greater numbers of unsuspected, or little expected, species that come into the river and up to Breydon in the six-hours' flood-tide that runs up twice daily from the sea. Thousands of



common shrimps pass up into the receptacle, and in springtime numbers of transparent 'Jack Shrimps' also. When the water comes in clear and pale green, during easterly breezes, it is interesting to watch the sticklebacks swimming in shoals to and fro, a fifteen-spined stickleback undulating through them, and others in continual motion.

But it is for its bird life that Breydon has been chiefly famous, for there is not another area of its size in the British Isles where a larger variety of birds have been seen and, in many cases, shot; indeed, upon its mud-flats have occurred several species new to the British fauna. Each period of the year sees a continuous arrival of different species, though, being subject to various atmospheric conditions, they come in varying numbers.

In spring, and May in particular, many birds 'in the red' or other attires of the nuptial state drop in, on their northern migration, to rest and feed for a few days or to be gone by next morning. On a continuance of fair south-easterly winds waders may halt here in unexpected numbers. Old 'Fiddler' Goodens, many years ago, assured me that godwits came in by thousands—crowd after crowd dropping in and passing on in succession. I have traced that particular May to the year 1866, a date made note of by the late Fielding Harmer, who was esteemed by the Breydon men as the doyen of punt-gunners, but who wrote very little. He stated: 'Specimens, too, of such birds as spoonbills, avocets, and spotted redshanks were obtained every season; but now two or three years may pass and no specimen of these rarer birds is shot. For example, in 1866, May 20th, and for three or four days after, godwits and knots were passing here in a north-easterly direction in thousands, followed for several days by stragglers, but in May 1887 only two godwits and four knots were shot.'

Fielding Harmer was a more refined slaughterer of birds, perhaps, than the old Breydon punt-gunners, who slew for a living; but he, for all his advantages, which went back to 1854, rarely made an entertaining or a readable field-note; his idea of ornithology was to record a 'shot', or 'seen and not shot', rarely introducing a line of descriptive matter. My own following up of Breydon birds, since 1895, has been



with my binoculars, and I have found this a far more interesting pursuit. In 1904 six fine spoonbills were bibbling with their 'spoons' in a little half-empty 'run' right in front of my old house-boat, wherein I was staying. Some four years earlier no fewer than seventeen were 'on show'. I lay in my punt one fine evening in May 1905 with no fewer than ten avocets pricking in the muds, and later, when the tide lifted them off their feet, they swam on the undulating ripples in line like ducks. One never knows what will turn up on the spring and autumnal migrations, and in the rare years of hard frosts fowl of every description may drop in and fill the inaccessible 'wakes', where they are safe from the guns. As for gunners, I knew two or three score of them who, having died out, have been succeeded by two or three amateur punters, who push out on to Breydon when shore-work is scarce. Not one who gets afloat now is likely to earn butter for his bread on a tide.

At the present time a bird-lover may have some difficulty in hiring a man or a boat in order to creep about among the flats and drains. In May he may be fortunate in meeting with small flocks of waders probing the muds or standing idly resting or trotting after each other, the males displaying their charms to their mates, and so tame are some that a very near approach may be cautiously made. It is an interesting experience to watch the movements of a mixed flock of gay turnstones, black-breasted grey plovers, black-vested dunlins, ringed plovers, with here and there a whimbrel and farther on a bunch of piping curlews, and yet beyond them a number of adult black-backed gulls mingling with a flock of black-headed gulls—all busily hunting, running, coquetting, whistling, squawking, and taking an occasional short flight. The knot is so tame that if you be quiet it will feed close to your boat's bow. Common sandpipers titter upon the flint-stone walls; whimbrel pipe their half-dozen notes, and for it, in some localities, are known as the 'Seven Whistlers'. More than all for beauty of its calling is the mellow, flute-like note of the handsome curlew, and noisiest of all is the long-legged greenshank, as it utters its clear, bell-like 'Pleu, Pleu, Pleu'. It is a veritable bird-watchman and quickly warns other birds against



Penryn Southport

PUNT-GUNNING ON BREYDON



what it suspects to be some sort of danger ahead or behind. Rare visitors are Kentish plover (*Charadrius a. alexandrinus* L.), the pectoral sandpiper (*Calidris maculata*), and the little stint (*T. minuta*). An eager watcher of birds will need keen eyesight and much patience to single out a smaller *rara avis*. And equally to be envied is he who gets within easy sight and distance of one or several avocets or a small party of spoonbills fishing in the shallows. The latter bird is capricious in its visits. One or two may loiter about the place for weeks—in the close season; at another time a small flock may drop in and are off again after a little resting. As the gunners would say, 'One never knows his luck', for visit after visit may be fruitless of interest, and then, unexpectedly, a surprise that repays for lost hours and even days awaits one. Black terns may come flitting into view, dashing at floating insects as they trip along and are gone! Pearly-backed terns may move leisurely, fishing as they fly, making for Blakeney or Scolt Head, while about the drains may be seen a dusky cormorant diving for eels and, when sated, goose-stepping to a bit of stranded flotsam on a flat in order to rest and hold out his wings in a letter M attitude to dry. Here and there a heron may be observed in more leisurely fishing, snatching at little 'butts' or juvenile eels.

On many occasions I have wandered miles afloat and ashore expecting to see much and have met with not a solitary item to insert in my diary nor seen a single bird of interest until I have almost reached home, when suddenly I have espied an Iceland gull, alone, tamely feeding within gunshot of a railway station; and on another jaunt observed and patiently watched a solitary wader at a puddle feeding on small crustaceans. Next day at the same spot a stranger from the Midlands took a pot-shot there, and to his surprise his victim proved to be as Siberian pectoral sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*). A pair of ruddy shelducks, in war-time, were feeding in a puddle within a few yards of four great pits made by bombs which, had they been dropped only a minute or so before, would have made chips of my old houseboat. In front of that same aged boat, when I awoke one morning and cautiously opened the door, I saw within gun-range a big old pelican sound asleep

after having had a hunt for flounders in the drain below him.

August brings renewed interest to Breydon. Adult terns, with their young ones, screech as they fly, or dip for whitebait, the youngsters remaining awaiting their parents. The three little ones are fed in turn, and seem to know it, for only one usually calls and gapes at a time. Sandpipers, from little stints to curlews and oyster-catchers, also drop in a while. Meantime there is to be seen only a boat or two of smelters at work ; no eel-men to-day are spearing or babbing ; the professionals have vanished, leaving a legacy of grumbling to the humbler amateurs. When the close season is over, here and there may be seen a home-made punt of ugly design and many a crack heard at single dunlins or, when there is not one to be seen, a pot-shot is taken at a miserable gull which may be left alive with a broken wing.

In snowy weather the old Breydon men revelled. Swans, geese, pochards, widgeon, scaup, and teal were looked for, and many fell victims to those who persevered amid floating ice-floes and raging snowfalls. ' Hard weather fowl ', which only rushed to inland waters at such seasons, comprised scaup and tufted duck and golden eyes. When the Broad were frozen coots in crowds came in, to wander in the shallows, snapping up the *Zostera*, and with it they crammed themselves.

Among the rarer birds that have been obtained may be mentioned the white-tailed eagle, the osprey, purple heron, black stork, broad-billed sandpipers, Mediterranean black-headed gull, Sabine's gull, white-winged black tern, and Caspian tern. Many collectors obtained their most valued birds here. E. T. Booth, of Brighton, and other collectors followed closely on the heels of successful punt- and shoulder-gunners, bartering eagerly for rare specimens. To-day collections of British-obtained birds have become unpopular, and few remain of several once noted and highly valued ones. The art of the bird-stuffer is decadent.

To review briefly the Mammalia whose claims to being Breydoners may be allowed, a grey seal (*Halichoerus gryphus*) may be mentioned, and an occasional common seal (*Phoca vitulina*). Common bats (*Vesperugo pipistrellus*) and the great



noctule bat (*V. noctula*) flit about on summer evenings. Weasels sparsely inhabit the banks, where they find an abundant prey in the younger brown rats. As for these rats, a dead gull or any other bird that floats to the walls at eventide is usually stripped of feathers and flesh by early morning. Water voles here and there find a burrow in a ditch bank, but herons give them careful attention. Porpoises have found their way upstream to Breydon, and in 1891 a lesser rorqual whale came some way up river from Gorleston Harbour and was set upon by Gorleston lifeboatmen, who captured it, afterwards having it preserved and exhibited in a tent.

It would not be right to overlook the men who in some numbers wrested a hard-earned livelihood from the Breydon muds and tides. Wherrymen, eel-catchers, smelters, gunners were a part of our indigenous fauna ; but they have practically passed. Even the wherryman, in this age of steam and petrol, is passing too, for scarcely a tenth part of the men formerly encountered remain afloat. In the 'seventies about a hundred wherries were trading on the rivers and Broads. The late John Thomas, known as ' Little Pintle ', was the last of the gunners who spent his whole time at the ' game '. Thomas's father and grandfather were punt-gunners before him. He had many adventures and several mishaps ; fingers were shot away by gun explosions, powder spots besprinkled his skin until his death, and a broken collar-bone was another result of using a bad shooting weapon. At one time he possessed a worn-out punt-gun so weak in the lock that it often missed ' cracking the patch ' twice running, and then he had to explode it by striking it with a piece of iron kept for the purpose. He made some big shots, once securing over a hundred dunlins after one discharge of his punt-gun. Avocets, black stork, spoonbills, swans, Temminck's stints also fell to his gun. Another noted gunman was ' Little Charlie Thacker ', who, as a small boy in the early 'fifties, ran off with his father's gun and punt and found and forced his way among the swarming fowl that had been driven inland by such severe weather that the old gunners preferred to stay ashore. Charlie returned home at noon with an astonishing number of fowl, and his father, meeting him at the quay-side, was so amazed at the

exploit that he forgot to use the strap with which he had awaited the lad's homecoming.

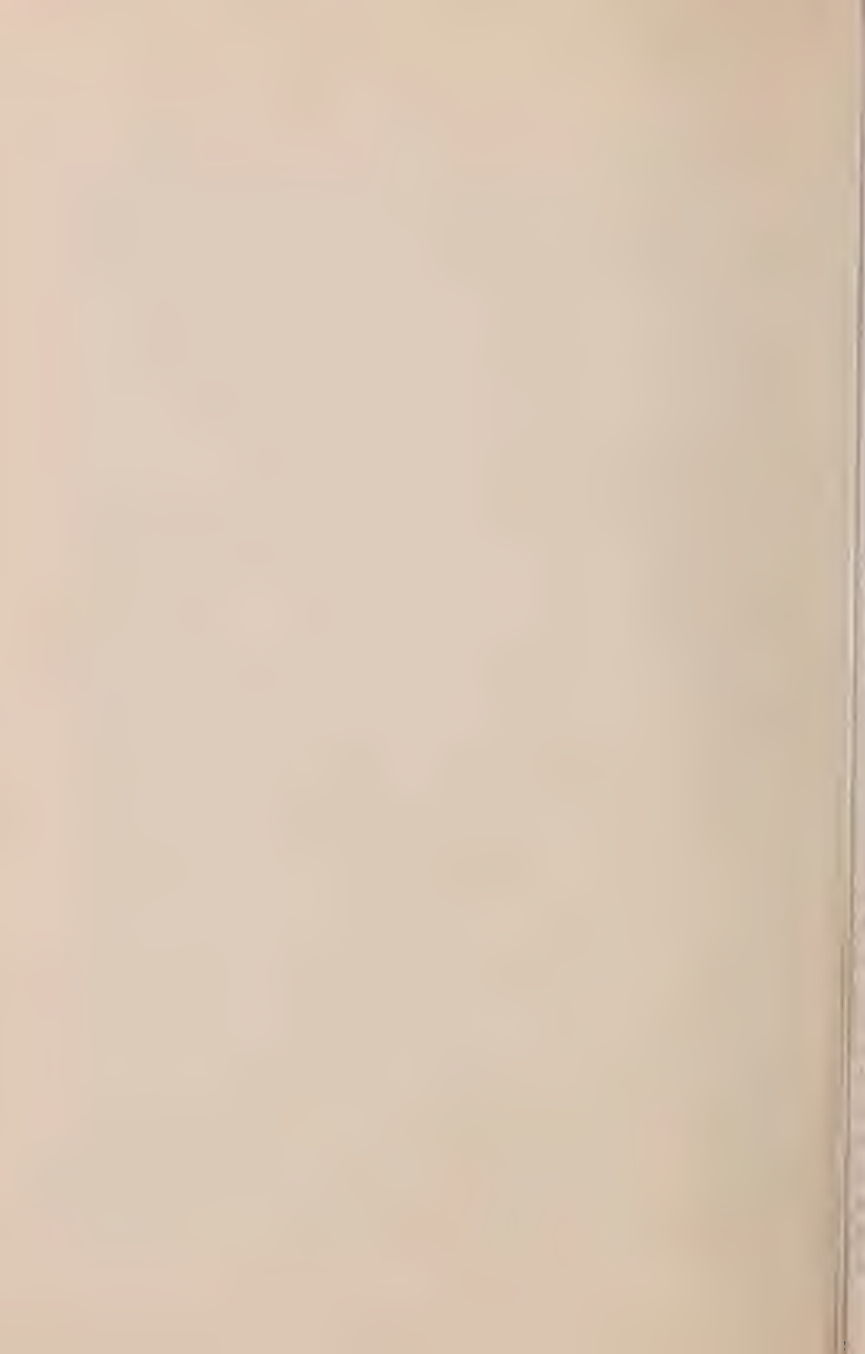
A long catalogue would be required to contain all the gunmen's names, and a book would need many pages to hold even a moderate number of their exploits. 'Old Stork' Thacker, Harry Collins, cabman-gunner; 'Salt-fish' Jex, 'Pero' Pestell, 'Short'un' Page, 'Huckerin' Tom Reed were only a few of these now almost forgotten characters who extracted a precarious livelihood from this wild, far-spreading lagoon. One aged punt-gunner only, named Fred Clarke, survives.

Just one adventure of long ago may be cited. The Pagets (Sir James and his brother C. J. ) in their *Sketch of the Natural History of Great Yarmouth* (1834), wrote: 'A remarkable case [of bird slaughter] occurred to an old man named Thomas, who on one morning, on awaking in his boat on the flats, saw not far from him a number of wild-fowl sitting in a crowd close together on the ice. From his boat being nearly covered with snow he had escaped their observation while they were collecting in the night. He immediately fired (his gun carrying about a pound of shot), and with those killed outright and the wounded, which he and his dog caught before they could make their escape, he secured no less than thirty couple of wild-fowl, consisting principally of widgeon and teal.'



*Frank Smith 1916*

THE OCTOBER MOON



## PART II

### CHAPTER XIV

#### BIRD LIFE

BY EMMA L. TURNER, F.L.S., Hon. M.B.O.U.

THERE have been considerable changes in the status of bird life in the Broadland during the last twenty years, and most of these are to the good. Still greater changes have taken place in the attitude of the British public towards birds. Ruskin said, 'God gave us the earth for our lives, it is a Great Inheritance.' In many cases our inheritance of birds has been pitilessly squandered. It is up to us to save the remnant from extinction, because it is not ours to destroy. Protection has done much to re-establish some vanishing species and to help others to maintain a precarious existence. According to Jim Vincent, whose unremitting care and keen enthusiasm have done so much to make the Hickling Sanctuary a success, 'Eight new breeding species have arrived since the Sanctuary started, namely, bittern, heron, marsh and Montagu's harriers, magpie, nightingale, pochard and tufted duck; 240 species have visited it, of which 93 have bred in it.'

The advent of the motor-car has brought great changes in the Broadland, and these changes, as far as they affect the bird life, cut both ways. Many marshes are no longer regularly mown and cattle-fed. Gone are the big sheds where, fifteen years ago, the coarse marsh haysel was cut, pressed into blocks and apparently rendered palatable for the much enduring London bus horses, which, it always seemed to me, much have had extraordinary powers of digestion. Many of the marshes and so-called 'meadows' have reverted, and the rough herbage is coarser and stronger than ever. The increased



growth of tall reed and sedge has entirely knocked out waders in these affected areas. The birds which most of all feel these economic changes are the lapwing, snipe, redshank, ruff, and reeve, and the charming little yellow wagtail. On the other hand, this reversion of a large area to its former uncultivated state, especially during the Great War, caused a temporary increase in the number of nesting bitterns, harriers, warblers, duck, and corn-buntings.

Since the average visitor to the Broadland takes only a casual interest in birds, it is as well to begin with those which are in evidence, dividing them into groups—the smaller passerine birds, water-fowl, waders, ducks, and birds of prey.

The commonest bird on the drier marshes is the meadow pipit. It is olive brown above and creamy white beneath, with dark streaks on the breast. Because it *runs* it is often confused with the skylark. The meadow pipit never rises high into the air like the lark. It flutters up in short flights and planes down uttering its attractive little trill. In the early part of the breeding season the air sometimes seems full of meadow pipits.

The commonest passerine bird in the waterways is the reed-bunting. The male is very conspicuous with its black head, white collar, and black patch on the throat. The female is less conspicuous, being clad in buff and brown, with buff lines both above and below the eye. The male reed-bunting may be seen clinging to the tall reeds in any waterway; thus swaying in the wind, he utters his monotonous little song. In the winter the reed-bunting is gregarious and may be seen in stack-yards in company with other finches and buntings. Yellow-buntings frequent the hedges and banks which divide the cultivated fields. Yellow-hammers are locally known as 'goolers'—a word which owes its origin to the Danish '*gul*', meaning yellow. The bulky corn-bunting is well distributed on the drier and less frequented marshes, and on arable land. It utters its wheezing song from the top of a bush and frequently perches on telegraph wires, where it sways up and down as if it had some difficulty in maintaining its balance and wheezing at the same time.

From mid-April till June the reed-beds are alive with

the garrulous songs of sedge-warblers. The sedge-warbler is distinguished from the reed-warbler by its very conspicuous buff eye-stripe. The arrival of the first sedge-warbler makes spring in Broadland ; its solitary chattering song is the opening phrase of the great chorus which will soon set the reed-beds quivering from end to end with music. The reed-warbler seldom arrives till May, but it sings till mid-July and often later still. This plain brownish songster with white underparts might be overlooked but for its continuous song, for it loves the seclusion of the thick reed-beds. When these two warblers cease to sing the marshes seem strangely silent—like a house when all the children have gone to bed. There will be no such riot of song till the next spring. The grasshopper warbler is a very shy and skulking dark brown bird ; it is nowhere common. The curious reeling song (which has been likened to the spinning of a fisherman's reel as well as to the sibilant sound produced by grasshoppers) seems to come from the heart of a bush. It is a difficult sound to locate, because the bird twists its head from side to side while it sings, and the low, persistent wave-lengths of song seem to come from various directions. Very little is gained by trying to stalk the singer. It is better to sit still and wait until the bird slips up a sallow bush, for it nearly always sings near a bush of some kind. The grasshopper warbler sings at night, and its voice carries a long distance across the sleeping marshes.

The tree-sparrow is locally common. It is distinguished from the house-sparrow by its brown head and double white wing-bar and black patch in the centre of the white cheeks. Both sexes are alike. It is much in evidence by Hickling Staithe, and nests wherever old pollard willows border the fields and roads.

It is impossible to describe all the small birds which one may meet on shore or in a day's sail. Wherever there is suitable cover, garden-warblers, common and lesser white-throats, and blackcaps may be found. The nightingale is somewhat rare, but frequents South Walsham inner Broad. Shrikes nest in the tall hedges bordering the 'lokes'. Red-polls and goldfinches have increased in numbers. In autumn and winter flocks of goldfinches may be met with even in the

main roads. These of course are merely roaming the country for food and are not necessarily local birds.

Of course the crowning glory of the Norfolk Broads is the bearded tit or reed pheasant. In spite of rigorous protection this somewhat delicate bird only just holds its own. About the year 1907 they were more numerous than I have ever known them to be since. Recent exceptionally severe winters have decimated them. They are essentially insect-feeding birds, and seldom leave the Broadland district in search of food. They do not wander far from their breeding area, which is limited. Nowhere are they abundant; in some localities they are fairly plentiful, and scarce in or altogether absent from others. The bearded tit is seen to perfection when the reed-beds are dormant; then its tawny colouring exactly tones with the decayed vegetation. It is very confiding, and hunts for food almost under the feet of the men when they are reed-cutting. They are charming birds to watch. On any windless day these accomplished gymnasts may be seen slipping up and down the tall reeds. The male with his grey head and black moustache is a prominent object; the female is not so obvious. Even in the breeding season bearded tits are not shy. Nests may sometimes be found in August, but as a rule in the late summer the adult birds are not much in evidence. Young birds, however, flit in and out of the reeds chatting as they search for insects. These birds of the year are strongly marked; their chocolate and buff colouring is very vivid. The note of the adult bird is a resonant 'ping', like a *pizzicato* note on a violin. It is uttered by both sexes.

Another delightful bird to watch is the yellow wagtail. It is a summer resident, and times its arrival in April when the kingcups are in bloom; then the brilliant yellow plumage of the male vies with the burnished chalices of the 'winking Mary-buds'. The female is more soberly clad in greenish yellow. These wagtails love the cattle-fed marshes, such as those which border the river at Potter Heigham and lie alongside the far end of Meadow Dyke. They are less numerous than formerly in those areas which have recently reverted to the rough. I have seen a whole family of young yellow wagtails on the marshes following a huge cart-horse as it slowly



MALE BEARDED TIT



THE LAST REEVE TO NEST IN THE BROADLAND







munched the grass. The birds perched on the horse's great hairy fetlocks and dashed beneath and around it after the flies which were stirred by its movements. This, too, within a few yards of the towpath and all the turmoil and noise of a regatta.

Amongst the water-fowl and waders, coot, moor-hen, lapwing, redshank, and snipe are most in evidence. Water-rails are more frequently heard than seen; ruffs and reeves no longer breed in the Broadland. Spring is the mystic time, and the spring dawn,

When without warning suddenly all the legion'd fowl  
rise from their beauties' ambush in the reedy beds,  
and on spread wings with clamorous ecstasy  
carillioning in the air manoeuvre, and where they wheel  
transport the broken sunlight, shoaling in the sky.

Coots abound everywhere, and are easily identified by their white frontal patch. Though generally speaking shy birds, they become very tame where yachts anchor. The numerous young which play round the outskirts of the reed-beds have white fronts. After the breeding season coots begin to pack. In the neighbourhood of Hickling and Horsey Mere they may be reckoned by thousands, till their numbers are reduced by the annual coot 'shoot'. One January day in 1930 I saw a line of coots stretching from Jarvis Point, Hickling, across to the Warbush. They were quietly feeding, and the murmur caused by their continual diving was a pleasant sound to hear. Suddenly a great black-backed gull appeared overhead, and immediately the coots bunched up into a compact black mass. They began to paddle with such rapidity and force that in a very few seconds they were completely enveloped in what can only be described as a 'splash-screen'. This hid them from my view and apparently disconcerted the gull, which, after a few unavailing efforts to detect a weakly bird, flew away, and the coots immediately returned to their normal occupation. The coot 'shoot' had recently taken place, and no doubt the gulls (which also shelter on Hickling and Horsey in great numbers) were on the look-out for isolated and wounded birds.

Moor-hens <sup>1</sup> are found wherever there is water. They are

<sup>1</sup> Anglo-Saxon *mor*, a bog.

somewhat furtive in their ways and quickly seek cover when approached. They generally scuttle across the water half flying and half paddling. If not particularly alarmed they swim in a somewhat consequential manner, with a curious jerky movement of the head and neck; this gives them a perky, self-satisfied appearance. If moor-hens were less common they would be given the palm for beauty. Seen at close quarters there are few water-fowl which can boast of such burnished blue-black plumage, while the vermilion frontal patch, red and yellow bill (with garters to match) give them an added distinction. The moor-hen is easily tamed, and decidedly amusing if you have time to win its confidence.

There are some seasons when the curious 'groaning' of the water-rail seems to dominate the marshes, but except in hard weather when water-rails are forced into the open they are seldom seen. It needs a keen eye to distinguish this bird from the moor-hen when it flits across a dyke; but its red bill is much longer than the moor-hen's.

In the spring lapwings utter their wild cries and perform wonderful stunts, looping the loop from pure joy of living, and perhaps to impress their brooding mates with their mastery of the air. Young lapwings are the first waders to leave the nesting-ground. The early hatched broods begin to migrate in mid-June. About June 20th lapwings may be seen passing along the coast in a steady stream all day. This migration increases throughout the autumn and is at its maximum in October.

Redshanks after their beautiful nuptial song and dance is ended, often stand on guard near the nest, when their vivid red legs show distinctly. They spend much time flying to and fro over the breeding area, whistling to each other; this musical, yodelling note is always pleasant to hear. Sometimes they hang in mid-air with wings pointing vertically downwards. In flight the white edges of the redshank's wings distinguish it from all other waders. The breeding stock repairs to the nesting area in March. As soon as the young are fledged they assemble in little flocks and roam over the marshes, but by the end of July most of them have left the

Broadland. Like the lapwings, they resort to the sea-coast and to tidal estuaries. After their departure 'the low, unfeatured landscape seemeth void of life', for the redshank constitutes itself the guardian of the marshes and warns other birds with its wild cries.

The common snipe breeds abundantly in some areas. Formerly, when the Muck Fleet was navigable in a small dinghy, the adjacent marshes seemed alive with snipe, and the twilight shivered in response to their bleating. This 'drumming' or 'bleating' sound is not vocal; it is made by the sudden expansion of the bird's tail, together with certain structural modifications in the shafts and vanes of the two outer tail feathers. The snipe is the earliest marsh-bird to awaken; its tremulous bleating seems to me a fitting herald of dawn. Snipe, lapwing, and redshank may be heard throughout the night in the early spring. Both in spring and autumn numbers of snipe are merely passage migrants. The Jack snipe is a winter resident only. It has a shorter bill than the common snipe and no median buff line on the head. It is a very silent bird. The common snipe gets up with a noisy cry—'scape, scape'—but the Jack snipe rises without uttering a sound; moreover, you almost have to kick it up, it lies so close in the rough herbage.

Ruffs and reeves visit the Broads in considerable numbers during both the spring and autumn migration. In late April the ruff may be seen in all the glory of his wedding garments—the frill and somewhat absurd head-dress. The ruff round the neck varies in colour and design with each individual; no two ruffs are ever alike. The spring display can often be watched—the sham-fights, the posturing, and the absorbing occupation of doing nothing! The ruff's gestures afford constant amusement and delight. Even when 'blackthorn winter' is in full blast it is worth while cowering behind a heap of litter in order to watch these ridiculous birds, and to admire the infinity of fresh designs which Nature can produce from her fashion-book.

The reeve is content with plain but exquisitely-pencilled plumage. In the autumn there seem to be more reeves than ruffs. Both sexes are then alike and can only be distinguished

by size, the male being slightly larger than the female. In flight they may be distinguished from redshanks, which they somewhat resemble, by the absence of white edges to the wings. The male's spring decorations are not displayed during flight.

Ruffs and reeves are at present lost to us as breeding birds. Great efforts are being made to attract some of the scores of passage migrants which visit the Broad in the spring and induce them to nest. The optimistic bird-lover hopes that they may succumb to these blandishments. It is very easy to destroy our native breeding stock, but one of the most difficult things in the world to reinstate it. Ruffs, and the female reeves, were ruthlessly destroyed in the early part of the nineteenth century; they were good for food, and easily netted wholesale while indulging in their spring display. As their nesting areas were circumscribed owing to increased cultivation, it was easy to wipe them out. Increased drainage was *not* the main cause of the ruff's extinction, as any one who reads the records relating to this species can see. There are many places where they could nest in safety and would have continued to breed but for ruthless persecution. Both the bittern and the ruff owe their extinction in this country to the greed of man. The bittern has returned, and some day we hope the ruff will also. The last nest recorded in the Broadland was the one I saw and photographed in 1907. The eggs were taken, and no words are too strong in condemnation of the selfishness which instigated this act of vandalism.

Writing in 1903, the late Rev. M. C. H. Bird said: 'Probably the bittern will never again rear its young in the Broadland.' He lived to see his statement refuted, and he himself was the first one to stumble across the Stalham nest on July 17th 1911. After Jim Vincent and I found the first young bittern which had been bred in the Broadland since 1886, a search-party was organized to find the nest. Five of us worked abreast through the suspected area, and the lucky finder of the empty nest was Mr. Bird; it was barely a dozen yards from the spot where Jim Vincent picked up the young bittern on July 8th. The return of the bittern is an old story now,<sup>1</sup> but neither Jim

<sup>1</sup> *Country Life*, 'Broadland Birds', by E. L. Turner.





BITTERN FEEDING YOUNG



FEMALE MONTAGU'S HARTIER ANI YOUNG





Vincent nor I will ever forget the excitement and the thrill of that exhausting hunt which resulted in definite proof that the bittern had again reared young in the Broadland. Since 1911 the bittern, whose boom 'spreadeth far afield with throbbing power; as when in a Cathedral a while the great diapason speaketh', is now an established member of the great Broadland orchestra. It had long been reckoned among the lost breeding species, and the subject of various obituary notices. Now, thanks to rigid protection, it has spread to many suitable areas on the marshes. Jim Vincent calls it 'The Mystery Bird', because so little is really known about its domestic habits. Since 1911 he has found and examined numbers of nests, with their young, and possesses unrivalled opportunities for studying the bittern's habits throughout the year; but even he is baffled by its furtiveness.

What lucky chance led to the bittern's re-establishment as a breeding species we do not know. It has always been a regular passage migrant, but generally found its way to the bird-stuffers! There is a tradition to the effect that a wounded bird was seen in the vicinity of the 1911 nest, and that this pricked bird may possibly have found a mate. This, however, is mere conjecture.

The bittern's boom ceases to dominate the marshes at the end of May; a late nesting bird, however, may be heard in June. At dusk these 'mystery birds' issue from their lairs, and, rising at no great height into the air, call to one another, in raucous tones, 'awk, awk'. If you are quick you may catch a glimpse of their dark forms as they slowly float above the marshes before the deepening twilight engulfs them. Strange birds—more aloof perhaps than any other species.

When I first visited the Broads in 1903 herons were constantly in evidence standing on the posts which mark the Hickling channel. One seldom sees them in this position nowadays. There are some twenty heronries in Norfolk, so that herons are very common objects along the rands and all over the marshes. At the time when young frogs come out of the swamps, herons sit about in the rough grass apparently gorged with these and other delicacies. At this season

I have often put up between fifty and sixty birds from one meadow alone.

Cormorants resort to the Broads and fish from the channel posts. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they nested regularly in trees at Reedham. In 1914 a pair reared four young in a disused heron's nest in Melton Constable Park, and I spent an amusing month visiting and photographing the young birds about three times a week. The nest was forty feet up in an alder on an islet in the middle of the lake. During the Great War there was a large camp in the vicinity of this lake, and the cormorants did not return. It is not true that the birds were shot because of the fish they ate. Lord Hastings was keenly interested in their unorthodox ways and would have welcomed their return. This unusual episode was one of the most interesting ornithological events recorded in 1914.

Both long- and short-eared owls nest sparingly in the Broadland, and recently the little owl has become quite common.

Short-eared owls nest on the dry marshes. They hunt by day and show fight if an intruder approaches their nesting area. The male will often follow you a long way, sailing overhead with noiseless buoyant flight and uttering a curious hissing cry like that of an angry cat. Now and again they swoop down on the enemy, and can inflict a nasty wound on one's bare head. In the autumn and winter short-eared owls are more plentiful than during the breeding season. These are overseas birds which depart in the spring. They feed largely on mice, small voles, and beetles. I have often watched a short-eared owl waddling in rough grass and grabbing the tufts here and there with his strong talons, and then lifting up one foot and extracting a beetle of sorts from its vice-like grip.

Long-eared owls usually lay their eggs in the disused nest of a sparrow-hawk or wood-pigeon, but since the disastrous flood of 1912, which destroyed numbers of trees in the riverside plantations, they regularly nest on the ground in these areas. The low, moaning cry of the long-eared owl is both musical and attractive, but almost ghostly at times. When you are strolling through the dim aisles of a pine wood, this soft, flute-like moan coming from an invisible source might

be the cry of a lost soul ; it is, however, only the love-song of the male owl. Careful inspection of the trunks of the tall trees may reveal the bird, for the long-eared owl loves to sit close against the bark. With ear-tufts erect it looks down at you with the crude, unblinking stare of a cat, and then floats silently away into the depths of the wood like a giant moth. The young utter a harsh note like the creaking of an unoiled hinge. Adult birds also make this noise when they are hungry. Both long- and short-eared owls occasionally indulge in a sun-bath, for neither species is strictly nocturnal. They also glory in soft showers of rain, and even in a snow-storm ; expanding their wings and raising every feather on the body, they sway gently to and fro as if to catch every drop of moisture.

Hen harriers visit the Broadland throughout the autumn and winter, but generally depart in April. Both Montagu's harrier and the marsh harrier may now be reckoned amongst the breeding species. The story of the protection and re-establishment of Montagu's harrier is a romance in itself. After twenty years of unremitting care, this magnificent bird has increased until its numbers have reached the maximum that one area can support. The diminution in the breeding stock of waders, especially in some localities, is partly due to the depredations of these aristocratic marauders.

The marsh harrier breeds less regularly, but is often much in evidence even when no nest can be located. From one hundred to one hundred and fifty years ago both the marsh and Montagu's harriers were quite common, but between the early part of the nineteenth century and the present day they became exterminated. From time immemorial they have occurred as spring migrants, but never had a chance to regain a footing in the marshland until 1910, when they were first rigidly protected. There was always a ready market amongst collectors both for the birds and their eggs—preferably the latter. Knowing this, the marshmen and keepers shot the male as soon as the female began to lay. In that land of wide horizons the male Montagu is a conspicuous object, visible for miles, and his method of feeding his mate gave away the nesting site. The female would lay her eggs every other day, and these were removed by the finder, who substituted eggs

of pigeons or owls (slightly rubbed over with blue), until the full clutch was laid. Then the egg collector used to come down and flush the female from the nest, in order to make sure that the eggs were genuine. These meanwhile had been reposing in the marshman's cottage, but they would be placed in the nest after the bird rose, so that the collector could boast that he had taken them himself. Only one clutch of eggs hatched during these years of persecution and three nestlings in down went to a private museum.

One of the unforgettable days of my life was a June day in 1903 when Jim Vincent and his father showed me my first Montagu's nest. I have seen many since then, but only one containing a melanistic nestling. This almost black youngster was a great contrast to his white, downy brethren. They are fierce from birth, these young harriers. Their brilliant piercing eyes bespeak high courage, a fact which their white nursery garments may lead you to forget. They need careful handling, and I marvel at the ease with which Jim Vincent seizes nearly fledged young and rings them. I once inadvertently put out my hand to remove a strand of sedge which interfered with my camera lens. In a moment the curved talons of a week-old nestling met in the ball of my thumb, and required some extricating. This was one of the first brood of young reared after the harriers were protected. They were known locally as 'The Royal Family'. Even Queen Victoria in her childhood was not more carefully tended than were these scions of a noble race.

Nestling harriers throw themselves on their backs and strike upwards with their feet and claws. I have seen the adult marsh harrier employ the same tactics when fighting with a bittern in the air. Both adversaries tried to 'hit below the belt' in this way, turning and twisting and momentarily lying backwards, thus striking upwards—the bittern thrusting with its spear-like beak, the harrier with its armed talons.

The appearance of a harrier questing for food causes a great commotion on the marshes. It will often be mobbed even by warblers, pipits and yellow wagtails. Lapwings try to beat it off with their wings, but the marauder remorselessly pursues its own ends and is seldom turned from its purpose.



by these feeble displays of anger. The only time I ever saw a Montagu's harrier perturbed was at Scolt Head, when sixteen sheldrakes drove it from the sandhills. The harrier's retreat was neither orderly nor dignified.

The flight of all species of harriers is distinctive. No other birds of prey float over the marshes with the same buoyant and deliberate motion. After a few powerful strokes they sway with uplifted wings, which are held at an angle of about forty-five degrees. Slowly they hunt for food, quartering the reed-beds, flying low, and peering into their depths. If the prey is sighted, they swoop down and emerge with it in their talons. The victim may be a bird, mole, frog, beetle, or even viper. Vipers are certainly less numerous on the walls than they were.

The marsh harrier is considerably larger than the Montagu. The male looks dusky brown, mottled and blotched. The grey on the shoulders, black primaries, and barred underwing are distinctive. The female marsh harrier is an almost unvarying chocolate brown, the pattern of the underwing being more uniform and less barred than that of the male. Both birds have a yellowish patch on the head, and this is very conspicuous in the female. In all species of harriers the female is larger than the male. There are of course many lesser distinctions in the plumages of both species of harriers. I have only attempted an impressionist picture, because, after all, that is all one gets of most birds in flight. It is, however, easy to recognize an old female marsh harrier by her great size and dark colour. There are times when she looks almost black. If the denizens of the reed-beds believed in an evil spirit she would surely be its incarnation, 'whose shadows seem a canopy most fatal', the female of the species being more deadly than the male! You have to leave whatever you happen to be doing in order to watch the 'war-hawk's' movements—the strong, purposeful flight, perfect poise, and superb indifference to the terror her presence inspires amongst lesser fowl, the only bird I have ever seen that attempted to stand up to her being the bittern mentioned above.

Mallard, shoveller, common and Garganey teal nest regularly on the marshes. Mallard are numerous, and shoveller

are increasing in numbers as breeding birds. Common teal have never been plentiful, though, taking the Broadland as a whole, they are widely distributed. The Garganey is, if anything, decreasing in numbers. Of late years both tufted and pochard have nested in one area. In the autumn and winter vast numbers of duck resort to the Broad, mallard, tufted, pochard, widgeon, and teal being the most common. Pintail, golden-eye, goosander, merganser, scaup, smew, and indeed almost all species are noted as passage migrants. Many species which spend their days on sea in fine weather resort to inland waters to shelter from north and east winds. I have even seen a fine long-tailed drake in the bay by my Hickling island, but that was on March 31st.

The great crested grebe is another example of the benefits of protection. No longer may it be chased by yachtsmen, or shot for its skin. Its numbers diminished steadily in the nineteenth century, so that it was looked upon as a somewhat rare bird. Now there is hardly a lake or small mere throughout the county which does not boast of at least one pair of breeding birds. In the Broadland it is most numerous on the deeper Broad, such as South Walsham, Ranworth, Ormesby, and Rollesby. The great-crested grebe or 'loon' was called by Sir T. Browne 'an handsome and specious fowle'. Certainly no bird can equal it for dignity and exclusiveness, especially when it has acquired its spring frill and ear-tufts. The stately grebe never looks ridiculous like the ruff, whose life in the spring is merely 'a vain show'. The male grebe has a rigid sense of duty and takes in hand the education of the little striped nestlings when they are about twenty-four hours old. While the female continues to brood, the male takes the young as they are hatched and introduces them to the Great Unknown. With much gentle persuasion a nestling is induced to climb on to the parent's back, where it often holds on tight by gripping the old bird's neck feathers. Thus it is carried beyond the seclusion of the reed-beds and taught to swim and dive. These first lessons are of short duration, but as grebes always dive if they are pursued, the newly hatched young are often plunged into deep water, and come to the surface without having loosened their hold. For the first



*Frank S. Young, Jr.*

REDSHANK



twenty-four hours of their life the nestlings are fed on partially regurgitated fish by the female, whom the male diligently feeds throughout the time of her brooding. The grebe's gizzard contains feathers instead of the grit which is swallowed by other birds to assist digestion. The parents have to use a great deal of persuasion at first in order to make the nestlings take their medicine, they being as loath to swallow things for their good as are most young things. I once spent some eight hours a day for ten days in a small punt within a few feet of a great crested grebe's nest and a coot's nest, which were only about eighteen inches apart. The difference in behaviour of the two species and their general *ménage* was most interesting. On one occasion the coot was seized with feminine curiosity, and walked on to the grebe's nest and began to poke her neighbour's eggs. I put an end to that by clicking the shutter of my camera. The coot slipped away in a guilty manner, and was ensconced on her own nest before the grebe returned. Young grebes keep with their parents until the late autumn, when both old and young leave the inland waters and resort to the sea. Occasionally, however, isolated grebes may be seen on lakes and meres throughout the winter. The following February the loon's instincts recall it to the peaceful inland waters. Sometimes for days they fly up and down the Broads in a restless manner, but after a prolonged and vigorous courtship those grebes which have come to stay take possession of their old breeding areas and settle down to the business of life. They rigorously guard their own territories and challenge any other grebes which trespass over their boundary. Constant fights ensue in which the females often take part; their submarine tactics are both interesting and amusing to the observer. Unfortunately most folk have to take their holidays in the autumn and not in the merry springtime,

When all the birds in all the trees,  
Duck, puffin, ptarmigan and geese,  
Do just exactly what they please.

To the bird-lover, however, there is something of interest at all seasons and in all places. There are very few weeks in the year when birds are absolutely sedentary. Always there is movement of some kind.



Those Broad's which are nearest the sea are the regular haunts of various kinds of birds during the spring and autumn migrations. A glance at the list of birds at the end of the book will give the reader some idea of the species which have been seen in the Broadland. From July to September waders especially are on the move. The breeding stock gives place to incoming and overseas birds. Numbers of lapwing, snipe, and redshank drop in to rest and feed ; some remain, many pass on. Even such strictly maritime birds as turnstones may remain for days. Godwits (both black- and bar-tailed), ruffs and reeves, ringed, golden and grey plover, little stints, common and wood sandpipers, and dunlin, curlew and whimbrel are amongst the most regular passage migrants. In September shy warblers appear again in the bushes, wheatears and redstarts perch on the corn-stooks by the sea. Spotted and pied flycatchers seek rest and food in the hedgerows. In the autumn I have seen bluethroats fighting with whitethroats on Horsey Warren. During an October gale of wind and drenching rain I once saw the trees and lawns of Horsey Hall packed with thrushes, blackbirds, ring ousels, fieldfares, and redwings.

In wild, frosty weather herds of whooper and Bewick's swans come baying down the wind, tracing ordered patterns against the sombre sky. Throughout the summer and far into the autumn flocks of sand-martins skim over the surface of Hickling Broad and roost in the reed-beds. In the evening their evolutions are similar to those of starlings but far more ethereal. At dawn they rise like a swarm of bees, twittering gaily and snapping at the myriads of insects which dance in the air. On windy days swifts often fill the sky. They are one of the latest migrants to return in the spring and the earliest to depart in autumn. Swallows and house-martins collect on telegraph wires and the roofs of churches in September preparatory to their departure for warmer climes. Kingfishers nest in many places, often some distance from the water. During August the young broods disperse and wander up the coast. Sometimes several visit my house-boat in the early morning, and, after fishing with more or less success, pass on.

In the spring all these birds return, some to breed, others merely resting on their way to more northerly breeding quarters. Flocks of pied, white, and yellow wagtails alight on the rands where the grass is short. With luck you may see a blue-headed wagtail amongst these. Perhaps for days an osprey will charm you with his marvellous dive, or a red-footed falcon flash past in the sunlight. It is necessary always to be on the look-out, for it is the unexpected that happens. It is just this uncertainty that throws such a glamour over bird-watching. Perhaps, after all, this particular kind of sport is only another form of gambling.

## CHAPTER XV

### ENTOMOLOGY

BY CLAUDE MORLEY, F.E.S., etc.

NORFOLK possesses in its Broads a physiological feature found nowhere else throughout the British Isles to so large an extent. Nowhere do marsh plants, marsh trees, and marsh animals of all kinds flourish so perfectly ; and consequently marsh insects are here in greater profusion than elsewhere. You do not see them, because it is not intended that you should ; if you could the birds could, and then the insects would be destroyed, and the plants, which they benefit us so greatly by keeping within bounds, would flourish to such an abnormal extent as to choke up the waterways and their adjacent marshes, just as the dense sudd blocks the White Nile. This is one of the surprising things about our marsh insects ; another is the way they protect themselves from their feathered enemies. Some that live on the great water dock are green, and pass their existence on the leaves ; others that are red inhabit only the flowers of the purple loosestrife ; yellow ones live in honeysuckle, and black ones in the mud of the river margins. Some water-beetles mimic fallen acorns ; and others, as though for a joke, exactly resemble the droppings of the birds themselves. Those that live on the reeds are long and narrow, those on broad leaves are round and flat like seeds. You can see a ship on the horizon, a skying partridge, or even the drift of your neighbour's business, but you will not find insects in their natural environment till you have had considerable practice at the art.

One of the disadvantages of this fascinating study is its very magnitude ; in fact, the number of different kinds of insects (which terms does not include spiders, wood-lice, nor crustaceans nowadays) is computed to be very nearly if not quite 15,000 in Britain alone. This world of insects is divided into

nations as distinct *inter se* as are those of the world of man. They differ from one another as completely in habits and tastes, and far, very far, more in structure and colour, than *Homo sapiens*. Therefore it will be most convenient to search our Broads for each of those great nationalities or *Orders* in turn, remarking only that justice is meted out by no means impartially, because a very great deal more is known of some orders than of others. Personally, I should guess that of British entomologists quite seventy-five in a hundred study only the moths ; so, of course, moths are better known than are the insects of any other order ; though of late years the beetles have come in for a larger share of attention.

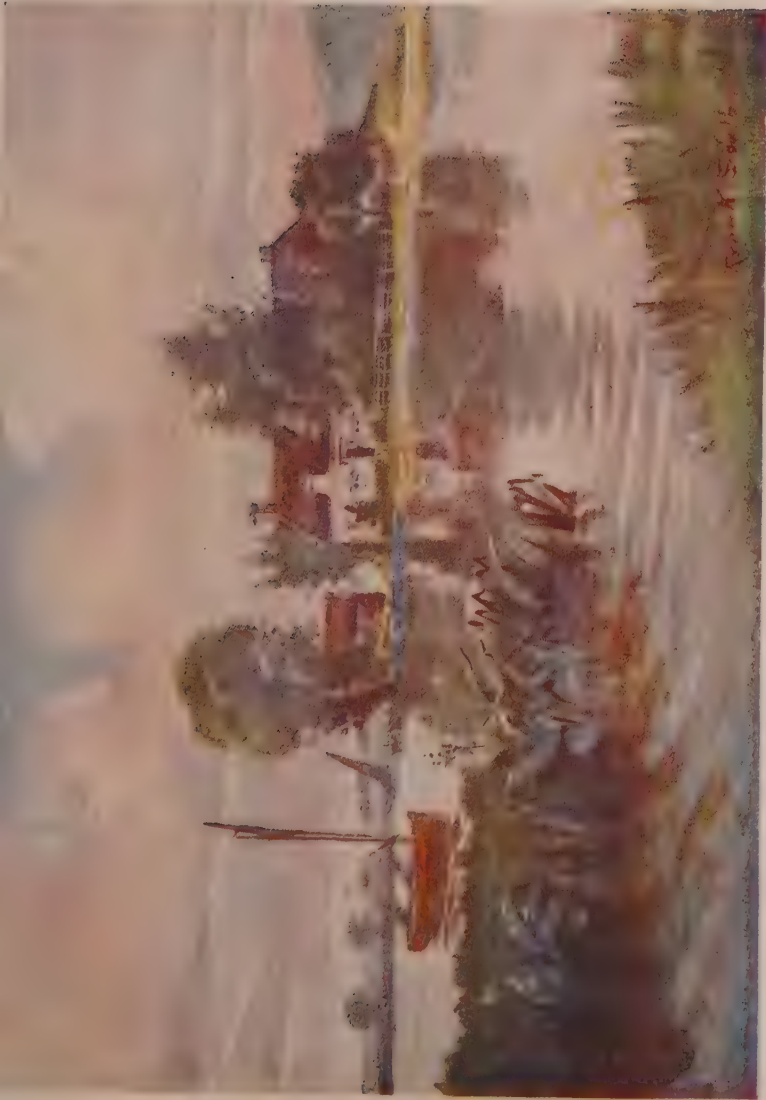
We are, then, going to the Broads to collect moths ; but let us first bear in mind there is one grand and glorious butterfly, which takes our breath away when it appears for the first time to us sweeping over the alder carrs in marshland, or opening and closing its wings while basking in the sunshine on a flower by the riverside, exhibiting the long projections of its hind wings, which have earned for it the name of Swallow-Tail. But you should not catch it ; so many have been caught and killed by greedy collectors and curious folk that it is becoming very rare, and is now found nowhere in Britain but in these Broads and in the fens of Cambridgeshire, where, I fear, it is less common than it was a few years ago. Of course, collectors are only a secondary cause of its threatened extinction ; the primary one is the draining of the wet places in which alone the hog's fennel, the food-plant of its caterpillar, will deign to grow. There is another butterfly, now but a phantom reminiscent of original bog, unbounded river, the bittern, and Savi's warbler, which at the beginning of the last century used to gladden one's heart with a sight of its large, copper-coloured wings ; but it gradually died out, and is now known only in old-time collectors' cabinets, a veritable treasure. The periodic butterflies, the Queen of Spain and the Camberwell Beauty, occasionally appear singly at various villages, and are quite as common here as elsewhere in England ; but one can never rely on a personal encounter.

Yarmouth is the gate of Broadland, and before proceeding farther you should try to discover a Bedstraw or Oleander Hawk

hovering about its portals, since they have both been found here, as well as the very rare *Cloantha perspicillaris*. When the Broad's themselves are at length reached, work the numberless alders for the Dotted Footman, said to occur nowhere else in Britain, but which may here be had in return for the requisite searching in July and August. The last record of the Gipsy moth living 'wild' is from Cawston, and in the old days Curtis and others used to take it quite commonly at Horning. The well-named Marveil-du-jour moth has been recorded from Aldeby, and the delicate Essex Emerald from Horning, though it is, I believe, not found in such numbers as is the case in its southern home.

The coast sands are so much a feature of Broadland—in some places, as at Horsey, almost touching the marshes—that I may be forgiven for calling attention to one or two of the local species which are found upon them. Of these, one of the most noteworthy is the Lyme Wainscot, which is abroad in July, though the caterpillar is better obtained in May by shaking the lyme grass on the dunes over a newspaper. The Fen Leopard, whose caterpillar only feeds within the Cambridge reed-stems, has been introduced (no secret is made of the fact, since it was becoming scarce in its old haunts) at Ranworth, and there appears, having escaped its great enemy, the reed-bunting, to be gaining a satisfactory footing in congenial surroundings; and in the same way the Scarce Chocolate-tip has been 'laid down' in Barton Turf. Nevertheless, there is no need to introduce alien species, unless, as in the above instances, it is for their own preservation; the vast array of indigenous ones will amply repay even the most advanced student, and to the tyro furnishes worlds unconquered. The favourite method of collecting imagines is to rig up a large white sheet between two poles and place a strong light before it; to this decoy, luminous for miles across the marshes, moths will flock on a damp, warm, breathless night from all quarters. In this manner have been taken such rarities as the Buff Footman, the Black Collar, the Bordered and Scarce-bordered Straws, as well as their cousin the Scarce-Marbled Clover. While searching for the Lyme Wainscot you might easily pass over the Scarce Pearl, which has been found resting on the grass-stems





HORNING FERRY



of the sandhills at Yarmouth, where you may also attract to your sheet-lantern the exclusive *Anerastia farella*, and are sure to find *Nyetegrates achatinella* among the maram grass early in July. Taken as a whole, you should secure the Sand Dart, the Portland Moth, the Shore Wainscot, and *Eupaecilia pallidana* on these sand-dunes at the proper time of year. Another splendid ground is the cluster of Broads on the Bure about Ranworth; here the Powdered Pearl, *Peronea perplexana* and *Iorguiniana*, among other rarities, have been found; and mention must also be made of *Crambus padellus*, which is nearly confined to this spot, as is *C. fascelinellus* to Yarmouth. Last and greatest of the moths I shall here indicate—for the majority is too numerous for mention—is Fenn's Nonagria, for this fine species is our own monopoly, occurring nowhere in the world outside the cluster of Broads about Horning, where, however, it is by no means rare, though not discovered till 1864. The caterpillars may be found on their food-plant by searching with a lantern after dark, and the moths themselves fly at dusk early in August amongst the gently rustling reed-maces. I saw many of the larvae there in June 1901.

The coleopterist in Broadland must have a water-net, for nowhere in the length and breadth of this country can it be used with greater effect than in our rivers, Broads, and brooks. No other county can touch us in the number of water-beetles, predacious and phytophagous,<sup>1</sup> for there have been recorded 173 out of a total of 220 kinds in these islands, some of which are almost unique and others exclusively Scotch. Of the predacious ones, *Hydroporus halensis*—English names are nearly unknown among beetles—is a 'good thing', and one that will appear in an occasional pool, such as existed formerly at Brundall station, in plenty, and then not be seen again for years; it has also been recorded for Horning and Stalham. *H. scalesianus*, first found in Norfolk, *H. neglectus* at Horning and Stratton Strawless, *H. ferrugineus* and *oblongus*, *Agabus striolatus*, of which we have a monopoly, *Ilybius guttiger*, and *Rhantus grapii*, all occur at Horning, and should not be mistaken for the common things they so much resemble.

Let us next metaphorically sit down in a mud-flat to see

<sup>1</sup> Plant-feeding.

what is running about seeking what it may devour, since perchance *Pogonus luridipennis*, first found here in 1806, but not taken now for many years ; some of the rarer *Bembidii*, such as *fumigatum* and *saxatile*, the long-lost *Pterostichus aterrimus* which used to bask on the wet mud by the Broad and fly in bright sunshine, to mention only a few rarities in the way of ground beetles, might fall to our lot. Among the roots of the reeds might lurk the rare *Aetophorus*, and we are sure to get *Odacantha*, whose brilliant red and green coat is conspicuous among the reed-refuse, especially in May. Many of the rove or cocktail beetles will be seen scurrying about, more especially those of the genera *Stenus*, *Trogophlaeus*, and *Homalota* ; of these there are so many good things obtainable that space cries Hold ! But I must just whisper *Stenus proditor* and *opticus* by sweeping at Horning, often after dark ; *Homalota atomaria*, *perixigua*, and *hodierna* in vegetable refuse, also at Horning, and add that good *Heteroceri* should also be found in this way.

A great deal remains to be discovered about our rove beetles, which have not yet received adequate attention. To instance a single genus, with, for the most part, swampy proclivities, *Bledius* is but ill represented by nine kinds ; *Arenarius* and *Cassidicollis* have been taken but a few miles south, in Suffolk, and a little farther, *Spectabilis* and *Bicornis* at Harwich. For the short-winged *Clavicornis* we are on classic ground, since at Norwich in 1825 was published Denny's Monograph on these atoms. *Blythinus burelli* was first found here in 1824 and named by Denny after its captor, and the same may be said of *Sparshalli* in 1823. Mr. Sparshall's collection of beetles is preserved in the Castle Museum. It is a most curious circumstance that such common things as the Great Stag-Beetle and *Helops striatus*, which abound throughout Suffolk, should be so rare as to be almost unknown in Norfolk ; yet such would appear to be the case. Marsh frequenters like *Telephorus figuratus*, *thoracicus*, and *lateralis*, *Silis ruficollis*, *Malthodes dispar*, and *Anthocomus terminatus*, all occur with more or less frequency. Of the fine longhorns, *Agapanthia lineatocollis* which is common in the Cambridgeshire Fens, has not been found for years ; but I expect *Oberea oculata* is to be discovered

in the willow bushes in August if they are searched systematically. Those essentially aquatic plant beetles, the lovely metallic *Donaciae*, you will find when, as Elliott says,

The reed-maces gently are rustling,

as well as all the other kinds known in Britain, excepting only *D. obscura*. In like manner all the *Galerucae* are common on the osiers and water-lilies, with *Phyllobrotica* on the skull-cap.<sup>1</sup> *Ceuthorrhynchus querceti* has only recently been added to our native fauna by Mr. Champion, from several examples taken in Horning Fen, and in all probability it is there attached to the wild radish. An idea of what you are looking for is in this case very necessary, since it is a small beetle with a strong superficial likeness to several common kinds.

Every one who is fond of beetles—and it is only necessary to notice their adaptability and wonderful economy to love instead of hating them, in which so many ignorant and superstitious people persist—ought to be interested in the bugs. Oh yes ! a nasty word, I grant you ; but nasty only from association : in America all insects are designated ‘ bugs ’ ; and do the peasants of East Anglia dislike lady-birds because they call them ‘ golden bugs ’ ? On the contrary, bugs—by which term is meant here only that nation of insects which has a proboscis and semi-membraneous wings—are of the utmost value to us, for they insert their proboscis into the plant-stems to suck up the juices, thus keeping down rank and superfluous growth. Bugs are at sight divided into two groups : those that hop and those that do not. The first section of Norfolk includes many rare kinds, and the coleopterist could nowhere begin to study them to greater advantage. Such rarities as *Plociomerus praticollis*, which is quite common here, the large *Reduvius peronatus*, often attracted at night by artificial light, and many other species of *Salda*, may be had with a little exertion. The little *Hebrus pusillus* and, I expect, *ruficeps*, will be found in wet moss ; the curious *Ranatra*, *Aphelocheirus*, and rare *Gerris fuscutellata* may also fall to your water-net. Mr. James Edwards has worked very thoroughly the hopping bugs of Norfolk, and the result has so well repaid his labours that

<sup>1</sup> *Scutellaria galericulata*.



*Typhlocyba debilis*, of which only about four specimens are known, and *Deltocephalus costalis*, a few species nearly confined to Ranworth Broad, have been recorded from the county which boasts in all a list not likely to be equalled from any other locality.

Of the nation of the locusts, crickets, and cockroaches, abundant abroad, there are but forty kinds here, and of these very few are recorded from our swamps, simply because they have never been looked for. But they deserve attention, not only on account of their omnivorousness and peculiar method of chirping. Every species has its own especial chirp, and if you have a good ear it is not difficult to tell what kind is talking in an adjacent osier-bed; but, like detecting a green beetle on a green leaf, perfection requires practice and patience. The sound is not emitted from the mouth at all, but is produced by the rough hind hopping-legs, which are rubbed briskly against the wings, like the pins of a musical box or their teeth, an invention thus long forestalled in Nature. Cockroaches are, no doubt, only too common—I call them cockroaches, but some people say black beetles: an invidious term, because they are not black and are not beetles! They will eat anything from blacking to ships' biscuits, and there are several wild kinds that will never live in houses, but are found in woods and among heather. One rather good grasshopper is only found in very wet places, and sure to turn up in Broadland is *Xiphidium dorsale*, a very handsome green and chocolate insect, common south of the Waveney.

One would expect caterpillars that live invariably at the bottom of shallow fresh, stagnant, or running water to be abundant in our moist places, but such seems to be the case to no exceptional extent in either Norfolk or Cambridgeshire. The great, grand dragon-flies—'horse-stings', as they are locally known, though quite harmless—seen hawking in darts along the margin of the river and the reeds of the pools, were once ugly creepy things resembling nothing so much as crayfish, that lived in the mud, subsisting on aquatic insects, which they stalked in an underhand kind of way, with a great arm usually tucked away under the head but capable of being shot forward at will to seize their prey when the latter thought itself

out of reach. The only kind really worthy of note is *Aeschna rufescens*, said by Paget, in his *Natural History of Yarmouth* (1834), to have been taken in the Halvergate marshes. It is still expected to occur in that vicinity, though I do not think it has been found since his time. The very name 'Water-flies' suggests such a locality as one for their discovery; but in point of fact I fancy no kinds of extraordinary interest have been noticed. These in their earlier stages are the caddis-worms, so curious on account of the queer cases they construct to protect themselves from the attacks of voracious dragon-flies and water-beetles. You may see a bit of stick or a bundle of tiny pebbles actually walking with no visible means of propulsion about the bottom of a shallow; but on looking closely a little black object is observed protruding from the front end. This is the head and forefeet of a worm—really a caterpillar—which is capable of retreating into its shelter at the least swirl of danger. Very curious cases have been constructed of coloured beads, and even metals, by allowing caddis-worms in captivity no more natural building materials.

And now let us for a moment briefly glance at the greatest and most potent of all insect nations, the *Hymenoptera*, under which heading are included groups differing as widely as do the Kafir, the Briton, and the Hindoo, but united, as under a common flag, by their possession of four small transparent wings, linked together by a series of tiny hooks and a hard, chitinous<sup>1</sup> body. It is here that we find the marvellous sagacity, almost intelligence, of the ants, bees, and wasps, whose inventions in the way of architecture and militarism, we are beginning to realize, have long preceded many of our own: the foresight of the sawflies, which secrete their future progeny in a little slit cut between the cuticles of leaves; of the ichneumons, most marvellous creatures, perhaps, of all creation, whose long ovipositor is plunged into some unwary caterpillar, there leaving the fatal egg, which produces a white, fleshy maggot and eventually destroys its unwilling host, from whose empty skin the plump parasite rises, just as the original Egyptian ichneumon was supposed to arise unaccountably from the despoiled crocodile's egg. But this vampire does not

<sup>1</sup> Mail-like.

always emerge ; sometimes a small green hymenopteron comes forth, and you know that the ichneumon, while preying on the moth, has itself been devoured from within by this verdant evil, which is consequently called a hyper-parasite—an interesting process illustrative of Swift's ' big fleas and little fleas ', and which would go well to the rhythm of the ' House that Jack Built '. No county has had its ichneumons better worked than have those of Norfolk by Mr. John B. Bridgman, who also found many of the rarer wild bees here, including *Sphecodes ferruginatus*, *Nomada obtusifrons*, and *Macropis labiata*, and also of the sawflies. His grand collections are in the Norwich Museum, and are worthy of an especial visit, being a monument to what even a busy man can do almost single-handed upon a neglected group of insects.

I have heard a man who studies the beetles of the world (a prodigious task !) say that there are only three sorts of flies, namely, house-flies, dragon-flies, and ' other flies '. This was, of course, in simulated contempt, for no one knew better than he that the last term comprised some 3,000 different kinds in England alone, and that dragon-flies, scientifically speaking, are not flies at all in the proper sense. Of house-flies there can be said to be only some dozen kinds, for most of those found indoors are nothing but chance visitors. But many of the ' other flies ' are very interesting on account of their varied habits and habitats. They are found everywhere, from the mines they bore in the leaves of the tallest trees to the roots of the tiniest plants ; from scavengers ridding the earth of carrion and offal, reducing it to the best possible manure, to the bot-flies laying their eggs on the skin of cattle, whence they are licked by the beasts into their stomachs, where the resultant maggots thrive and grow fat to maturity ; from, in fine, flies which literally live on elephants to others which prey upon and destroy insects no bigger than themselves. In the Broad's we find a great many marsh flies, whose caterpillars pass their life in or upon the surface of water, such as many of the *Stratiomyidae* ; or in the spongy club-mosses, but more especially in the water-plants and reed-beds, all of which swarm with gnats, mosquitoes, crane-flies, and hoverers. The last-named are very useful entities in the balance of Nature ; they have



'PLEASURE BOAT' INN, HICKLING BROAD





active, carnivorous caterpillars, frequenting plants infested with green-blight, or *aphides*, which they seize in their powerful jaws and devour with gusto in great numbers. There is, I think, a fortune awaiting the man who will keep a menagerie of these destroyers, to be let out on hire to florists and others whose rare cuttings and bulbs are attacked by plant-lice. Two very common hoverers throughout the Broads are *Tropidia vilesiformis* and *Pyrophæma ocymi*; I have also taken the rare *P. rosarum* at Wroxham.

I have pointed out in this chapter but few of the beauties of roadland's insects. Plenty of others will be found awaiting observation there; but they must be looked for. It is pleasant to be on your wherry and watch the winged wonders of air and water; but if you are content to do this you will find when you get home that 'the devil bubbled below the keel, "It's human, but is it Art?"' No; watch the incessant war of the insect world, both direct and subtle, that is waging around you, but do not discover its cause and effect; find that with it activity is stimulated, the most useful in Nature only is preserved, that the fittest only survive, the noxious perish, and that without it the worlds—the worlds of insects, of plants, and consequently of animals and man—would stagnate, putrefy, and finally rot. We do not yet comprehend what we indirectly owe to our tiny uttering friends, but glimmerings begin to pierce our blindness.

## CHAPTER XVI

### POND LIFE

BY H. E. HURRELL

**I**N pursuance of the study of this important branch of Natural History, the student has one of the most delightful tasks before him that can possibly be imagined—that is, if he be an enthusiast ; and no one, unless he be ‘ over head and ears in love ’ with the subject, will be able to derive from it the unqualified delight and constant enjoyment that is the certain lot of all earnest students, or be able to solve the many little zoological problems that crop up now and again in the course of his perambulations from pool to pool. Research in pond life offers triple advantages : it takes the seeker after knowledge into a world totally different from that in which he has otherwise lived ; it gives him a wider view of the great plan of creation, and takes him away (for a time at least) from the cares, the bustle, and the business anxieties of a workaday life. No study could be at once more entertaining, more informative, or more useful than the elucidation of the mysteries relating to the life-histories of the habitants of our inland waters. There is no lack of opportunity given to the most busy man, provided he be an earnest student ; in and around the mighty city he can find plenty of living organisms coming under the general term of pond life—for wherever the river rushes and swirls or a garden pond exists, he will be sure to find, on intelligent search, objects that will employ his leisure to an almost unlimited extent, and provide him with pleasure and information that is only obtainable from a ‘ speaking ’ acquaintance with the merry movements of the fairy forms with which he will continually come in contact. Or if he have an hour or two to spare he has but to take a short trip to the country district immediately surrounding the town in which he resides to be at once in the midst of unlimited ‘ game ’.

He requires no beater to drive the animals he is in search of from their cover, or dog to retrieve them, but hies him to the first farmyard pond, wayside pool, or ditch, where he is provided with 'sport' that not only gives him present interest but certain and abundant material for home examination and study. The pond-life cult has this advantage over almost all other Natural History pursuits—it brings before the notice of the acute observer an immense variety of objects that, while not belonging to his particular department, afford him a fund of information that is not obtainable in any other way. In seeking for specimens, he must necessarily become acquainted with the beautiful water-plants—too often miscalled *weeds*—that confront him on every hand; and not only this, for the autumn and winter months provide a variety of species as well as the more prolific months of spring and summer, and the various natural aspects of the countryside, its ever-changing panorama of plant and flower, the bursting of the trees into leaf, the grandeur and wealth of their summer foliage, and the beautiful shading-off of their leaves into the kaleidoscopic hues of autumn, together with the harvest and fruiting periods; all these tend not only to whittle down the anxieties of life and make it more worth living, but afford permanent and useful study that no book could furnish, no lecturer, however eloquent, convey.

The waters of the Broads district are rich in the matter of their micro fauna, and can compare well with any part of the country; in one or two instances it furnishes species marked down in the text-books as rare. This is certainly the case with the beautiful Cordylophora, which is to be found in the vicinity of Hickling Broad and Heigham Sounds in immense quantities during the summer months and late into the autumn. Allied to the Hydra, it is a much more interesting and attractive creature, and when seen fully extended is an exceedingly graceful tenant of a small aquarium.

Passing by numerous larvae of insects and beetles whose life-history comes within the province of the entomologist and the coleopterist, the attention of the pond-hunter (for so he is ignominiously termed) is attracted by two very well-known forms, viz. the Entomostracan, *Daphnia pulex* (water-flea),

and the true Crustacean, cyclops. There are several species of the former, which abound in immense numbers in open ponds and ditches, and during the summer the water is so full of them that it is frequently coloured a deep red, caused by the presence of many millions of these tiny animals disporting themselves therein. The water-flea is interesting from all points of view : its movements are very peculiar, its progression being effected by a series of sudden jerks brought about by the use of branched antennae, while the brilliant compound eye with which it is furnished and the shell in which the creature is enclosed make it a very good and entertaining object under the microscope. There is a very fine species of the *Daphnia* to be found in Ormesby Broad, and which on account of its size has been named *D. elephanta*. This water-flea possesses an enormous eye, brilliantly coloured and highly interesting from many points. Unlike the majority of *Daphniae*, this species substitutes for the spasmodic jerks so characteristic of the family, a bold stroke with the arms, which sends it along at a swift pace through the water, giving its movements the appearance of flight.

The cyclops family has three special representatives, which include *Cyclops quadricornis*, *Diaptomus castor*, and *Canthocamptus*. This pretty little fellow gained his name from the formidable single eye occupying the central portion of its head, and as seen with its double egg-bag attached to its body is extremely interesting. *Diaptomus castor* is a lovely fellow, and is possessed of a pair of very long antennae, with which he strikes out boldly and all but flies through the water. The remaining species, *Canthocamptus*, is known not only by its smaller size but by its zigzag movement.

Another lively little animal is the Cypris, which lives and scuttles along in its bivalve shell with the greatest of ease, and the collector is sure to catch in his tube-net at the right season (spring to autumn) plenty of water-mites, some a brilliant red, others a beautiful green, and all of them more or less spotted with black. In the brackish waters near Great Yarmouth the fresh-water shrimp is sure to be met with. Other forms are the water-louse, notable for the fan-like plates attached to the under part of its body for respiratory purposes. This is a

ravenous creature to keep in an aquarium, and his movements must be closely watched if it is intended to keep any polyzoa alive in the same tank or aquarium. The diving spider has always been a favourite 'catch' with naturalists, and these may be found at all seasons and can be obtained in the winter-time by breaking the ice on a pond and watching for the appearance of an individual of the species. These, in brief, are but a few of the larger so-called micro forms to be found in Broadland waters. There is, however, another world of life and movement at the other end of the scale, viz. the Infusorial Animalcules; they abound wherever vegetable matter exists, and nowhere so much as in the weedy ditches around Hickling and in the vicinity of most of the other Broads. Saville, Kent, and others have dealt fully with these; but there is plenty of room for further research on the part of those having time and opportunity. Mention should, however, be made of the beautiful tree-like form of the Vorticelli family, viz. *Zoöthamnium arbuscula* and kindred Vorticellidans which are to be found in plenty on the rootlets of sedges growing by the margins of all our rivers where the salt tides do not reach them, and in all the Broads without exception.

### THE ROTIFERA

Of all the wonderful inhabitants of the waters in the Broadland district, probably none can compare for interest with the Rotifers, or 'Wheel-bearing Animalcules', as they were originally called, on account of the almost perfect semblance of a wheel-like motion going on at the head or crown of the animal. Prior to 1840 or 1850 very little was known about this full-specied order, owing probably to the defective optical and mechanical appliances then in vogue. This is clearly demonstrated from the fact that an early observer noted the circumstance that he was not able to give a correct drawing of the animal under observation, because it would rush across the field of view. All present-day microscopists know that with a Rousselet Compressor, or similar appliance, the smallest animal may be kept perfectly still and made amenable to the



will of the operator. To this may be ascribed the great popularity now enjoyed by the study of the Rotifera.

Some of the early observers made somewhat shrewd guesses into the anatomy of these tiny animals, which vary from  $\frac{1}{10}$ th to  $\frac{1}{500}$ th of an inch in size, and some queer diagrams appear in their books and writings ; but a few, although not enjoying the benefit of the modern highly-finished instruments and corrected lenses, came wonderfully near to a perfect description of many of the families and a large number of species, showing what enthusiastic students they must have been. As a matter of fact, the discovery of the various species (now numbering over 300) may be said to have gone hand in hand with the perfecting of microscopic lenses and appliances up till about twenty-five or thirty years since. The earliest English observer of whom there is any record is John Harris, F.R.S., Rector of Winchelsea, who detected the common rotifer, which he describes in the *Philosophic Transactions* of 1696. Leeuwenhoek was the first to find and describe *Limnias ceratophylli* (one of the Melicerta family) in 1705, Eichorn, Baker, Müller, Joblot, and others being the discoverers of some twenty species prior to 1838. After this date a large number of microscopists seem to have given attention to the subject, with the result that every year substantial additions were made to the list.

Norfolk is well represented in the late Mr. Thomas Brightwell of Norwich, who published in 1848 his *Sketch of a Fauna Infusoria for East Norfolk*, a monograph dealing principally with rotifers found almost exclusively in the Broadland district. The sketch is, for the period at which it was written, exceedingly well done, and is beautifully illustrated by the author's wife ; but, like many of his contemporaries, Brightwell placed Rotifers amongst the Infusoria. Out of about ninety species enumerated and described, 25 per cent were rotifers. Thanks to the labours of the late Mr. P. H. Gosse, F.R.S., and Dr. C. T. Hudson, the whole class Rotifera has been focussed into a grand work compiled jointly by them, and entitled *The Rotifera or Wheel Animalcules*, published in 1886. There were scores of treatises, essays, and reviews in existence prior to this by the same writers and a number of other scientific observers, but this may be considered the most complete and reliable of all

up to the date of its publication. The finding of a large number of new species both in British and foreign habitats necessitated the publication of a supplement, which appeared three years later. Like many other subjects, there can be no finality about it, as from time to time new species are being added by students all over the country. To such men as Mr. C. F. Rousselet of London, John Hood of Dundee, and a few others, is to be credited the immense amount of interest now taken in the subject, the former gentleman having elaborated a plan of mounting all the species fully extended and with lifelike perfection.

A recent single-handed exploration of the Broads district has led to the enumeration of a large number of species, but from the natural aspect of the district there must be a large number yet to be placed on the list. Rotiferan life appears to be largely dependent on the chemical property of the water in which it exists. There are many species that are to be found in the brackish and saline waters of the ditches surrounding Yarmouth that are not to be seen in the fresh water more inland and beyond the reach of the salt tides. The rotifers found in lacustrine waters such as Ormesby Broad, Fritton Lake, and Wroxham, are, as a rule, much finer specimens than those found in smaller pieces of water, doubtless owing to the quality of the food to be obtained, and other conditions under which they live. *Brachionus pala* is to be secured in almost every part of East Norfolk, but nowhere is there such a grand example of the species to be found as in Ormesby Broad, where it not only attains a larger size than elsewhere, but is beautifully transparent and altogether a magnificent species.

As the form and structure of the Rotifera may be 'caviare to the general', the following definitions given in Hudson and Gosse's great work will be helpful :

'The Rotifera are small aquatic animals varying from  $\frac{1}{16}$ th to  $\frac{1}{800}$ th of an inch in length, and derive their name from a wheel-like appearance produced by fine circlets of hairs (*cilia*) seated on the front of their heads. A few species are marine, but the great majority known to us belong to fresh water, and are to be found in ditches, ponds, reservoirs, lakes, and slowly running streams. . . .

' (1) They swim by means of hairs on the front of their heads ; (2) they possess a simple stomach and intestine and peculiar jaws ; (3) they have muscles which are sometimes striated, and which often pass freely through the cavity of the body ; (4) they have a well-developed vascular system ; (5) their nervous system consists of one ganglion with nerve threads radiating to their organ of sense ; (6) they are diœcious, have ova of two kinds, and do not pass through any distinct metamorphosis.'

Rotifers are most lively and industrious creatures, for, whether viewed at morning, noon, or evening, they are always at work. As a matter of fact, some of them are so formed that they have no opportunity of resting, and are condemned to perpetual motion during the term of their natural life. For the purposes of classification the Rotatoria have been divided in four main orders, as follows :

I. Rhizota (the rooted), which always remain rooted or fixed to weed or algae when adult, like the *Floscule*, *Melicerta*, and *Stephanoceros*.

II. Bdelloida (the leech-like), that swim with the ciliary wreath and creep like a leech, as the *Philodinadae*, in which family are found *Rotifer vulgaris* and *neptunis*.

III. Ploima (the sea-worthy), that only swim with their ciliary wreath, such as *Brachionus pala*, *Hydatina senta*, and a large number of other species.

IV. Scirtopoda (the skippers), that swim with their ciliary wreath and skip with arthropodous limbs, such as *Pedalion mirum*.

The list which appears in the Appendix is not intended as a complete record of the species to be found in the Broad's district, but so far as it goes it is authentic, specimens of every one of the species having been found by the writer, who has confined his researches to the ditches, ponds, and pools in East Norfolk, and the chain of Broad's running from Ormesby via Hickling to Wroxham, with an occasional visit to Fritton Lake, Oulton Broad, and the now much neglected Surlingham Broad. That the list may be largely extended is frankly acknowledged ; but the work of making a systematic visit to all the places



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named at different seasons of the year could not be accomplished by one individual, though to get a correct idea of the number of species to be furnished from the district visits at frequent intervals to all the places referred to would be necessary. While it is to be regretted that so few microscopists and naturalists have developed a penchant for the study of rotiferan life, the subject is of such engrossing interest that it is to be hoped it will be taken up by naturalists living in Norfolk, so that Broadland's micro fauna may be properly and fully described. So far as the rotifers are concerned, the list in this book could, under these circumstances, easily be doubled and possibly trebled.

In the neighbourhood of Great Yarmouth some of the most prolific ditches have recently been sacrificed to the exigencies of bricks and mortar, and where but a year or two since the rotifer-hunter could make sure of taking in his tube-net a score or so of species, there is not a drop of water left, the ditches having been filled in and built over. This will necessarily occur in the vicinity of all large towns; but it will be a long time before any serious difficulty will be placed in the way of the micro naturalist, who, if he be but in earnest, will test every semblance of a pool or collection of still water, from the water-butt in his back yard to the magnificent sheets of water which are the pride of East Norfolk.

Now a word as to securing these most beautiful of Nature's wonderful creatures.

The apparatus required is simple and cheap in the extreme when the importance of the study is taken into consideration. The absolute requisites are a tube-net and rod, a rake, a few wide-mouthed bottles, and a small flat-sided tank for examining water by the pond-side. An aplanatic lens of an amplification of about eight diameters is also indispensable for use outdoors, and also for mounting and other purposes at home. This last may be had from Messrs. Watson's, High Holborn, or a triple folding lens may be obtained from almost any optician. On the principle that nothing is better than the best, the aplanatic lens is recommended as far and away the best and in the end the cheapest, as it saves time, trouble, and temper in the examination of species.

The purpose of the tube-net is to strain or *sift* the water so as to get the maximum of life with the minimum of water. The form of net in use by most collectors is about six inches in diameter at the mouth, tapering down to fit the mouth of a tube of about two fluid ounces capacity, special tubes with a flange for more perfect security being obtainable at Mr. C. Baker's establishment, 244 High Holborn. The net may be made of linen of good quality, or, what is better, of silk similar to that used in flour-mills for sifting the finest flour. The *modus operandi* is to draw the net with considerable force through the water, and then give it a rotary motion with a wrist action so as to facilitate the straining of the water through the net material. In this way all life, large and small, gets imprisoned in the tube below. The tube need not be emptied at each dip; ten, twenty, or an indefinite number of dips may be made before emptying its contents into a bottle or jar; but care must be taken lest the organisms already caught escape when the net is plunged into the water.

The rake is principally used for pulling up weeds on which the rooted forms are to be found. A sharp hook similar to that used in blackberrying is also useful, but not nearly so good as the rake—one of five or six teeth set fairly close together serving the purpose admirably.

## THE POLYZOA

Of all the larger forms of so-called micro pond life the Polyzoa are amongst the most-exquisitely beautiful; they may be appropriately termed fresh-water feathered beauties, on account of the similarity of their delicately formed crests to the down of birds. As seen by the unassisted eye in their natural habitat, or in a micro tank at home, they look like minute living feathers attached to a fleshy mass, and certainly provide the most beautiful of all the micro fauna.

The undoubted king of the Polyzoa, crowned as he is with his double crest, is *Lophopus crystallinus*, a veritable treasure to the microscopist on 'show' evenings, and a never-failing source of enjoyment to the student, who can never tire of

looking at the charming crest as it is gradually protruded and unfolded. The Lophopus is one of the six polyzoons to be found in English waters, and is generally to be taken in clusters of from four to six or even more individuals on dead or dying vegetation in slowly running streams or shady ditches. The principal feature of all the class is the beautiful plume or crest, which in Lophopus assumes the shape of a double horseshoe, each tentacle being delicately ciliated so as to assist the animal in securing its food, the tentacles themselves aiding by closing on their prey and making its escape absolutely impossible. A very interesting and pretty sight is that of Lophopus engaged in an attempt either to swallow or get rid of a Volvox which has involuntarily strayed within the range of the double crest. The beautiful globe is much too large for the polyzoon to 'bolt', and the currents set up by the cilia on both appear to prevent its escape. The contest is evidently unpremeditated, and both Lophopus and Volvox seem to appreciate deliverance from their dilemma. Lophopus is not to be easily secured, though when found is generally to be taken in large quantities. *Anacharis alsinastrum* (thyme-weed) is its principal selection in Broadland waters, and upon the tips of the leaves of this well-known water-plant the familiar orange-coloured sac in which the polyzoon lives is to be found.

The searcher for the Polyzoa can do no better than find the shadiest nook in some dyke leading from a Broad or river, and examine the rootlets of willow trees and haul up portions of the roots of such sedges and water-plants as may be growing there, the iris for preference, as on this plant the writer has found not only Lophopus but other forms in great profusion during July and August. The principal exception in respect to the shadiness of the polyzoon's retreat is in the case of *Cristatella mucedo*, which is a light-loving animal, generally best procured in sunny situations. The crest of this species is not quite so fine as that of Lophopus, but the creature itself is much more numerous. It is unique in that each polyzoon, although independent so far as its special functions are concerned, is attached to a sort of gasteropodic foot, which creeps slowly over the water-plants, aiding the animals in their search for food. So social, however, are Cristatellidans, that in spots

where the conditions are specially favourable they are to be met with in vast numbers. On Hickling Broad and all along Kendal Dyke leading from the Thurne to Heigham Sounds they are generally to be obtained in plenty, whilst on the reeds and sedges in the vicinity of Surlingham and Brundall they are sure to be found just below low-water mark. Sometimes the long-leaved water-plants are covered with *Cristatella* as with a beautiful down or filmy mould ; there can be no mistaking it when once seen, and its glories as a microscopic object are *par excellence*. Like all the members of its class, it is reproduced by statoblasts, a sort of bud formed within the animal and liberated when death and decay takes place. The statoblast of *Cristatella* is the largest and most interesting of them all, and bears well-formed hooks, which cling tenaciously to water-plants, and in the early spring split open and liberate the young polyzoon, which speedily multiplies by a kind of gemmation into a colony. It may be added that *Lophopus* also has locomotive power, but of such sluggishness as only to be noticeable on comparing its relative position day by day, as it would probably take a week to travel two or three inches.

*Fredericella sultana* is a beautiful polype, and lives in a well-formed tube which encircles or encrusts the roots of the larger water-plants or surrounds the stem of anacharis and other weeds. Its crest of tentacles is more circular in shape than those of the polyzoons previously referred to and much smaller, the animal when fully extended looking like a silver star if viewed by dark-field illumination. It loves the soft waters of the river-fed Broad and open water spaces, on the margins of which it can scarcely be missed if systematically searched for. And here again it may be well to state that the very best implement to use is an ordinary rake, with which to pull up the submerged roots of plants, which should be examined in the palm of the hand *under water*, when the Polyzoa may with a very little practice be seen and should be detached (with the rootlets) and placed in a bottle or jar with plenty of water from their habitat.

*Plumatella repens* is another delightful crest-bearing polyzoon, having its tentacles displayed in somewhat of a horseshoe form. As its specific name implies, it creeps or



spreads itself along the object on which it grows. In the Broads district it is fairly abundant, and should be sought for on reeds and rushes at about a foot below the surface of the water. In the summer and autumn of 1901 it was very general in all parts of Fritton Lake and in Heigham Sounds. *Paludicella* is a polyzoon very much like *Fredericella*; but its tube is flatter, and instead of the polypes emerging from the end of the tube they protrude from a tiny opening near the end of it. This is a very beautiful animal, and should not be missed. It produces buds entirely distinct from the other Polyzoa.

*Alcyonella*, now known as *Plumatella Fungosa*, is also included in the fresh-water Polyzoa, and grows in sponge-like masses in similar places to its confreres. As a matter of fact, the student of pond life need have no lack of material upon which to base his researches, for summer and winter alike provide abundance. The prime necessity for every worker is enthusiasm, and with this he is bound to succeed.

### ECOLOGICAL

All who have studied the order Phylactolaemata to any extent will have become acquainted with Allman's superb monograph on the subject, and Hinck's more recent work on the marine Polyzoa, as well as the very illuminating work of Dr. Kraepelin and other German workers. So far as the British families are concerned, they are fairly plentiful in most parts of the British Isles, and are met with in almost every piece of still water. I doubt if they are to be found at all in any of our swift-running streams, as their frail dwellings are in some cases rather simple in construction and liable to become encrusted with sand and debris of all kinds, and if they existed at all they would only do so in small detached colonies. During the past twenty years and more it has been the writer's special endeavour to see how far the fresh-water Polyzoa exist in East Anglia and more especially in Norfolk and the northern part of Suffolk.

It is generally accepted that the fresh-water Polyzoa owe their origin to the marine species, or at least were originally



marine forms. It can hardly be otherwise, seeing that some of the habitats where they are to be found in greatest abundance are in sheets of water the beds of which were at one time covered by the sea, as witness the Bramerton Crag, near Norwich, on the river Yare, which is almost entirely composed of sea-shells.

The river Yare has only one or two small Broad, but these happen to be the richest and most prolific in Polyzoa. These Broad are Rockland (sixty-six acres) and the two small sheets of water a mile or two nearer Norwich (Surlingham), the acreage of which is probably not more than twenty or thirty; but within the space of from two to three miles almost every one of the British fresh-water Polyzoa is to be found. The Broad fed by the Bure lie well out of the reach of the salt tides, and here is the true Broadland district, some seven or eight principal Broad having a united water expanse of about 1,500 acres. In north-eastern Norfolk, and fed by the rivers Ant and Thurne, is another series of Broad; whilst within six or eight miles of Great Yarmouth are Ormesby, Rollesby, and Filby Broad, which are true lakes and have no connexion with any river.

The ecology of the order is pretty well established, and the principal agent making for the welfare of the Polyzoa in the Broad district is the influence of the Yare estuary, known as Breydon Water, upon the food-supply. This is a tract of mud-flats three or four miles in length and three-quarters of a mile wide, covered at high tide to the extent of two or three feet. These flats provide food not only for the birds congregating there at low tides, but also act as a gigantic culture medium for numerous diatoms, which, with other algae, are swept into the river channel, and carried up to the Broad at each and every tide. Sections made of *Cristatella mucedo* disclose the presence of many of the species of diatoms common to the estuarine waters, whilst in the coenecium of *Fredericella sultana* diatoms of all kinds are to be seen embedded in the horn-like tubes formed by the animal, pointing to the fact that the tin creature, after extracting the sarcod from the frustules of the diatom, makes use of the silicious skeleton to strengthen its own dwelling. *Navicula*, *Surirella*, *Diatome vulgare*, and



DRAINAGE MILL NEAR BARTON—AUTUMN



numerous other species are so freely used for the tube-building process that a prepared specimen almost furnishes the idea of a spread slide of diatoms.

With the exception of *Victorella pavida*, all the known British species have been found in the Broads named. In one cutting or short canal leading from the Yare to one of the smallest Broads the following families are to be found, viz. : *Lophopus crystallinus* in great profusion on the stems of potamogeton, yellow water-lily, anacharis, the stems of reeds and rushes, and even on snail-shells and submerged branches of trees. During one season the roots of the water iris were densely tenanted by *Lophopus*, but, strange to say, although largely prevalent in these waters, the common starwort never harbours this or any other of the Polyzoa. *Fredericella* has a great predilection for the lower parts of reeds, the free roots of the alder and willow, and the decayed and sunken branches of trees. *Plumatella repens*, and the many varieties of that vigorous family, will cover the under side of lily leaves and completely envelop their stalks almost down to the roots. *Cristatella mucedo* has a special liking for the water-lily, the delightfully pellucid colonies of this polyzoon sometimes surrounding and completely enveloping the long stalks from the river-bed up to the broad floating leaf, which also they will sometimes completely cover. The delicate *Paludicella* seems to require some protection, and is more frequently than not found intermingled with the more robust but yet somewhat diminutive form of *Fredericella sultana*. The strangest polyzoon of all, and the most prolific in growth, is undoubtedly the fungoid form of *Plumatella*, formerly known as *Alcyonella fungosa*, but now recognized as a true *Plumatellidan* and named *Plumatella fungosa*.

This is to be found at its best in South Walsham Broad. It is to be found spread along submerged branches to the extent of four or five feet, and even more, whilst some fine, spindle-shaped colonies have measured seven or eight inches in circumference.

Nearly all the families of Polyzoa produce statoblasts, which are a kind of winter bud, and it is by these, and only by these, that some of the numerous *Plumatellidans* can be

determined. The only British fresh-water polyzoon that does not produce statoblasts is *Paludicella*, but in their place is a sort of terminal bud called the hibernacula, which may be found cemented down upon the stone or stem upon which the animal has grown and starts a new colony from this point. In addition to these winter buds, some Polyzoa produce larva-like embryos, as is abundantly proved in the case of *Plumatella fungosa*, a spindle-shaped form issuing from the coenecia of the assembled polypides. At the proper season (July to August) these will issue from living colonies in captivity, and if the mass be disintegrated under water these young forms will be thrown out in large numbers, and, if properly fed, will proceed some way towards starting new colonies, but not to the extent of forming the well-known fungus-like mass. One of the most interesting things to watch in connexion with statoblasts is the opening of *Cristatella* statoblasts or any one of the *Plumatellas*, which are formed much in the same way as a watch-case opening on a hinge-like piece and thus extruding the young polypides.

It is not suggested that the Norfolk Broads provide the largest number of species of fresh-water Polyzoa, or in any greater abundance than the lakes and streams of other parts of the country, and if diligent search were made other habitats could surely be found ; but it is somewhat strange that with such ideal surroundings as the Norfolk Broads provide, nothing has yet been seen of several species. *Victorella* *may* be found elsewhere than in the Victoria Docks, London. This form was first noticed by Saville Kent upon the hydroid zoophyte *Cordylophora*, which was presumably brought into dock on the bottom of ships from foreign ports. The genus *Pectinatella*, found in such masses in American waters, has not yet been found in Great Britain.

A great desideratum with Polyzoa is the matter of aeration. In very hot weather, when a great deal of oxygen supplied by the water-plants is absorbed, the Polyzoa nearest the surface, in cases where the vegetation is disturbed, soon succumb, as will many of the more delicate fresh-water fishes ; but where the water is in constant, though not rapid, motion, as in the case of the Broads fed by rivers, they thrive well.



Another habitat for Polyzoa not yet mentioned is in the piping connected with the great waterworks that supply filtered water to our towns and cities. When the water is released from some of the supply pipes in the summer-time small masses of moss-like material will be forced out, and these are generally the living tubes of *Fredericella sultana*, which have found an agreeable habitat within the piping. There have been cases where this polyzoon has grown so luxuriantly as to prevent the easy flow of the water to the reservoirs.

## CHAPTER XVII

### BOTANY

BY THE REV. G. H. HARRIS, B.A.

THE district commonly known as the 'Norfolk Broads District' is drained by three rivers—the Waveney, Yare, and Bure—flowing into the sea at Yarmouth as one river, the Yare. The famous Broads are simply expansions of these three rivers, occurring here and there in their course. They are slow rivers, so they cut no deep channels, but readily extend themselves into any depression the country they flow through may afford. As the country is, for the most part, uniformly flat and marshy, it follows that a 'Broad' may be found at any point from the source of these rivers to their outlet into the sea. Accordingly, Broads fall into two classes, as they are near to or remote from the sea: first, those which are brackish because they are affected by tides or salt springs; secondly, those beyond the influence of the ocean, which are of course ordinary sheets of fresh water.

There was a time when there were more Broads and when the present Broads were larger; but various causes have co-operated to restrict these waters more and more to the river channels. For instance, Hickling was, not long ago, larger by the whole extent of Chapman's Broad, and Blackfleet Broad still figures on the Ordnance Map. But these are now nothing more than stretches of marshland intersected by dykes. And, similarly, all the Broads are surrounded by what was originally water or bog, but is now marshland in all stages of dryness, ranging from the ordinary cornfield to the wild, sour, intractable salt-marsh.

These considerations affect the distribution of the flora. We get, on the one hand, a flora peculiar to the salt marsh near the coast; and, on the other hand, an inland flora, which falls into two classes, (1) that of the unreclaimed marsh, of

which the Hickling district is typical, (2) that of the reclaimed country farther inland, much of which is drained by the Yare, and whose flora presents features in common with the ordinary flora of arable districts. Needless to say, in such a division as this there must be a good deal of overlapping; but, in a rough way, there is such a division, and it will be convenient to observe it.

There is yet another sort of country bordering on the Broad District, but in its physiographical features quite distinct from it, namely, the sandhills and denes of the coast. The propinquity of the coast at Horsey to the Broads, and the central position of Yarmouth, make it so certain that the sandhills of the former and the denes of the latter will be visited by a good many cruisers in Broadland, that it becomes necessary to describe their flora as a part of that appertaining to the Broads District. To begin, then, with these.

The vegetation of the sandhills proper consists largely of maram grass, with here and there large patches of the uncommon and shyly flowering lyme grass. A careful search will reveal spikes of a very rare grass, closely allied to the maram, and common on the sandhills of the opposite coast, namely, *Ammophila baltica*; and if the searcher on the sandhills to the north of Yarmouth is lucky, he may light on that rare rue, *Thalictrum dunense*. In the loose sand, the purple sea-rocket, the sea-purslane (*Arenaria peploides*), the sea-holly, the saltwort, and the prickly restharrow may be seen everywhere. Near Winterton the sea-buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) flourishes, despite the rapid inroads of the sea, which annually invades its homes and sometimes carries it away in masses. It bears in plenty its edible orange berries, which the natives used to cook, and still call by the curious and underivable name of 'Wye-bibbles'.

The 'Denes' of Yarmouth are flat, sandy plains to the south and north of the town. Those to the south are quite remarkable botanically. The greater part of the short fine grass is a variety of the ordinary *Poa annua*, namely, *Poa bulbosa*. This grass has provided, not against a rainy day, but against a good many dry days to be spent in a dry place, by developing bulbs at its roots. The grass itself dies down

early ; the bulbs fall away, and may be found for the rest of the year blowing about with the sand. In the spring they vegetate and make the new grass of the following summer. In addition to this species, another rare grass, *Weingaertneria canescens*, which grows in purplish tufts, and possesses a marvellously beautiful awn, worth examining, is plentiful on both Denes. Again, if we connect both Denes, no less than twelve species of clover can be found. This list includes such rarities as *Trifolium subterraneum*, *T. scabrum*, *T. glomeratum*, and *T. suffocatum*. These rarer forms are mostly South Denes plants. Botanically, this small triangular strip of Denes, bounded on the north by the town, by the sea on the east, and by the high land of Gorleston on its third side, and isolated therefore from any kindred soil, must be nearly unique. In length only a mile, in breadth a quarter of a mile, and yet three rare grasses and four rare clovers, to say nothing of a fine crop of henbane, make it a happier hunting-ground for the botanist than all the rest of the sandhills and denes, from Lowestoft to Happisburgh, put together.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now pass to our division into tidal and fresh-water districts.

Surrounding the waters of Breydon at Yarmouth, and Lake Lothing at Lowestoft, and along the coast from Winterton to Happisburgh, is a certain amount of land that may be described as salt marsh. During the last century house-building and greater attention to river walls considerably limited this area, and there is little now but the immediate vicinity of the above-mentioned estuarine Broads, with patches of marsh here and there, that deserve the name. The flora of the salt-marsh has, in consequence, lost some striking representatives.

Here it may be interesting to pause in order to note quite briefly flowers conspicuous in the Broad District by their absence, both (1) those that one would expect to find there, and (2) those that used to be found, but are found no longer, or with difficulty. In the former category are the blue meadow

<sup>1</sup> *Trifolium suffocatum*, *T. subterraneum*, *T. glomeratum*, and *T. scabrum* also occur on the Denes at Lowestoft, where, as at Yarmouth, the grass largely consists of *Poa bulbosa*.—ED.



A BURE BANK





crane's-bill (*Geranium pratense*), that fine flower so decorative to the Thames banks ; the marsh violet (*Viola palustris*), with its large circular leaves ; the comfrets ; and, on the heaths, as last but not least, may be mentioned the pet flower of the poet, the sweet-smelling thyme. In the latter class are the yellow horned poppy, which has disappeared from the beach of late years ; the sea-heath (*Frankenia laevis*), which in 1834 was reported to be getting rare and has now quite gone ; whilst none of the sea-lavenders (*Statice*) have been seen for a hundred and twenty-seven years, although growing freely both to the north and south of our district. More recently the queer little thorough-wax (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*) and a very rare orache (*Atriplex pedunculata*) have yielded to the stress of change, and they blow no longer on the shores of Breydon. There is also the marsh flea-wort (*Senecio palustris*), which has had one foot in the grave for years, but still lingers, a notable survivor amid the gradual decay of a noble and illustrious flora.

It will be noticed that all these flowers, with the exception of the last-named, are flowers of the beach and salt marsh. A dearth of flowers will perhaps never happen so long as the Broads remain, whatever draining may do. But a dearth of the characteristic Broad flora is threatened. In face of this it may not be amiss to utter a protest against adding to the unavoidable conditions of extinction a condition that is avoidable, namely, the diminution of rare plants by specimen-collecting for herbaria. The practice of those collectors who, not at all in the interests of science, but simply for the gratification of their personal ends, do not scruple to increase their collections even if the extinction of a plant is to be the result of their undisciplined and unfruitful zeal, is greatly to be deprecated. More than one plant has, to the writer's knowledge, been decimated in this way ; and even if actual extinction has not been the result, it has reduced to a minimum the chance of the plant maintaining itself against present odds.

There is, however, a fair number of typical marsh flowers still to be found. There is the grey, drooping, maritime wormwood (*Artemisia maritima*), with which may be found the scurvy grass (*Cochlearia officinalis*)—no grass, however, as

any botanist knows, but a plant closely allied to the cabbage. The wild celery, too, and the wild fennel, and the small but pretty sea-milkwort, can easily be found. In the autumn the Michaelmas daisy turns many a muddy bank into a garden of flowers. The sea-thrift is not so common as one would expect, but grows sparingly on the shores of Lake Lothing, together with the golden dock (*Rumex maritimus*). The muddy shores of Breydon and Lake Lothing have, in addition, thick beds of the marsh samphire (*Salicornia herbacea*), which many think is the plant Shakespeare alludes to in *King Lear*. It is, however, quite different, and never grows in situations of which it could be said :

How fearful  
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low !  
The crows ad choughs, that wing the midway air,  
Show scarce so gross as beetles.

And with the marsh samphire are other beds—of the red-tinged sea-blite.

Farther into the marsh the handsome marsh-mallow grows. In the dykes which everywhere intersect the flats the stately flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) lifts its handsome head of rose-coloured blossoms, and intermixed with it may be found some of the species of that poisonous white umbellifer, the water dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides* in the salt marsh, and farther inland *silatifolia*, *crocata*, and *phellandrium* may be mentioned). This plant has enormous stems and roots. The latter are embedded in the semi-liquid black mud of the dyke bottom, and if lifted out will generally repay any one hunting for larvae for his trouble. A singularly graceful water-weed is the horned pond weed (*Zannichellia palustris*). It is a feature of the dykes and pools in the neighbourhood of Burgh Castle.

The fresh-water Broad have, of course, many flowers in common. And here it may be said that so far as the Broad have a flora peculiar to themselves, it is scientific in its interest rather than scenic. It is, perhaps, fortunate that so few of the remaining rarities are calculated to impress the picnicker. Many beautiful flowers do adorn the banks of all the Broad, but they may be found everywhere in England where there is

water—although in the Broads they seem to grow with an exceptional luxuriance. Of such is that exceedingly lovely flower of the gentian family, the buck-bean, the flowering season of which is, by the by, over with the end of June, so it is missed by the ordinary summer visitor; and together with this, flowering about the same time, is the marsh cinquefoil, with its curiously conventional-looking blossom. The two water parsnips (*Sium*) also grow in profusion, and the greater spearwort is everywhere prominent, with its large yellow flowers. Two of the bladderworts are fairly common, and the third (*intermedia*) can be found. The sundews are scattered all through the district, loving most the beds of sphagnum. In the south the round-leaved is the commonest, but in the north *Anglica* is as common. That very distinctive St. John's wort, *Hypericum elodes*, favours a similar habitat. One of the most difficult flowers to find in the Broad district, a flower which is a prize wherever it is found, both for its beauty and its rarity, is *Gentiana pneumonanthe*. This, too, grows in damp, heathy places. The water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) is extraordinarily plentiful in places, but never seems to seed, although in the far past it did so, as is shown by the fossil seed-vessels which have been found locally. The arrow-head is also very common, and two bur-reeds, *Sparganium ramosum* and *simplex*. Of the Great Spiraea, the hairy willow-herb, the red and yellow loosestrifes, no more need be said than that these fine wild flowers, characteristic of aquatic scenery all England over, grow in these open and sunny marshes in unusual abundance.

The deep-water Broads, such as Wroxham and Fritton (with which we may class generally the country drained by the Waveney and Yare), lie in a comparatively cultivated district, and are not, botanically, so interesting as the shallower Broads, particularly those connected with the Ant and Thurne, two tributaries of the Bure, lying to the north of that river. Still, Filby Broad can boast of a fine growth of the water hemlock (*Cicuta virosa*). The classical locality for the very rare wintergreen (*Pyrola rotundifolia*) is in the neighbourhood of the Yare, and the fragrant bog myrtle (*Myrica Gale*) is hereabouts common. In addition, the great meadow rue

(*Thalictrum flavum*) may be found at Horning and at Burgh Castle, and the sweet reed (*Acorus Calamus*) at Beccles.

It is the great stretch of marshland and wet common beginning below the high land of Martham, and stretching away to Palling on the east, Barton on the west, and Crostwight on the north, including the extensive Broad system of Hickling and the watersheds of the Ant and Thurne, that is the storehouse of botanical treasures. To the non-botanical public much of it is ugly and ungraceful, but the botanist revels in its new and interesting forms.

In June the banks are rich in carex. The little brown spikes of this protean genus are alike as egg to egg to the passer-by, but on examination they will be found of many species, each striking out a distinct and original line for itself, in which the disposition of male and female flowers in the spike plays an important part. To the botanist the distinctions are well marked, and members of the family are not half so difficult to discriminate between as a cursory acquaintance would seem to declare. Many of the species are rare and among the best prizes available in the district. And there are one or two that are really ornamental, such as the two larger species, *paludosa* and *riparia*, whose dark elegant spikes, contrasting strongly with the bright greens of the young grass, are among the first of the signs of approaching summer.

These are common anywhere ; but *Pseudo-Cyperus*, which has gracefully drooping yellow-green spikes, very distinctive, is not generally common, but is frequent on the Broad. It flowers later than most of the *Carices*, and its spikes may be seen when the summer is far advanced. Roughly speaking, there are between thirty and forty species of *Carex*, some very common and some difficult to find. Among those generally uncommon are *divisa*, *teretiusecula*, *paradoxa*, *limosa*, *distans*, *filiformis*, *divulsa*, and *extensa*.

Another family of plants which plays a large part in the plant life of the Broad is *Scirpus*. *Scirpus lacustris* is the tall reed that lines so many of the river banks. This, it is worth remarking, is the true bulrush, which name is generally given to the handsome and well-known reed mace, which also (both species) grows in abundance. *Scirpus maritimus* is one



of the prizes of the Hickling district. *Juncus* (which is the rush proper, as *Scirpus* is the reed, and *Carex* the sedge) grows everywhere in most of its many varieties (here ten can be found).

Akin to these, rare elsewhere, but in the Hickling district growing by the marshful, is the prickly twig rush (*Cladium jamaicense*), tall, gaunt, and harsh, a true daughter of this wild country. The pretty black-headed *Schaenus nigricans* is another rare rush-like plant to be found in plenty on Barton Broad, and elsewhere, in close association with the meadow plume thistle (*Cnicus pratensis*) and the Grass of Parnassus, which last, the latest of the Broad flora to flower, is to be seen at its best about the beginning of September. In the far north of the district, the berry-bearing alder (*Rhamnus frangula*) is plentiful. Its cherry-like fruit is conspicuous in the late summer months.

In the shallow Broads, the true water-weeds, those whose habitat is neither the marsh nor the bank, but the water itself, are very interesting, perhaps more interesting than any other part of the Broads flora. The depth of the Broads in this district averages only about four to six feet, and so they offer a desirable home, of which the water-loving plants are not slow to avail themselves. In many places, particularly in Somerton and Hickling Broads, a tangled forest of plants grows, a very Eden for fish, whose forms are easily distinguishable as they thread a sinuous way through the watery jungle; for the water is at most times pretty clear, and when calm as well, every leaf and ribbon of these delicate water-plants can be seen waving gently to the motion of whatever imperceptible current there may be. A great part of this aquatic tangle is formed by the lime-encrusted, offensive-smelling family of the *Characeae*. When fished up, these plants are pleasant neither to the eye, to the nose, nor to the touch. They have an aggressive *noli me tangere* look, and are horrid with bristles. But seen through the softening medium of the waters, and in company with such elegant plants as *Potamogeton pusillus*, the water milfoils, and the hornwort, the impression left is that of a miniature forest where fir and larch grow mixed in a striking though harmonious contrast.

In summer, in the shallows of Hickling Broad large yellowish white spots appear on the bottom. The Rev. M. C. H. Bird tells me these are in their origin masses of floating weed. They are made up, no doubt, principally of *Chara*. These masses are drawn up by the sun in dry summers, when the Broad is low, and often form a nesting-place for water-birds. On such a mass of weed the last black tern that nested in this district laid its egg. Finally, the lumps sink to the bottom and there decay. Being composed largely of the lime-encrusted *Chara*, the vegetable part of the lump disappears and leaves an insoluble deposit of lime, to be seen as the conspicuous light-coloured spot which is quite a feature of the Broad.

Among these water-weeds is one of the latest additions to the British flora, *Naias marina*, discovered by Mr. A. Bennett in the 'eighties. There are also such rarities as *Nitella flexilis* and *opaca*, and *Lychnothamnus stelliger*, to be dredged up from the bottom. In the leaf-axils of the last-named is a beautiful white, star-shaped formation, by means of which the plant reproduces itself, and not, apparently, by the usual means of propagation.

The pondweeds (*Potamogeton*) are many in number and various in form. About fifteen species can be found, from the broad, flat leaf of *natans*, beloved of tench, that floats on the surface of many still dykes, to the wavy, ornamental leaf of *crispus*, the grass-like leaf of *gramineus*, and the curious leaf of a form of *lucens*, with its midrib prolonged like a claw.

There are two classes of plants in which most visitors, botanists or non-botanists, take a lively interest, and which therefore may well be reserved till now for special notice. They are the ferns and the orchids. Our geographical division will still apply, as the country of the Ant and Thurne is rich in the orchids of the district, while ferns, as will be shown, are everywhere scarce. With respect to the latter, the luxuriance of *Osmunda regalis* does much to compensate for the paucity of species. This magnificent fern, although depleted in many spots by the fern-gatherer, still grows in great beds, six feet high, in the Catfield country. Its popular name of 'Flowering Fern' is, as is the way with popular



SALHOUSE GREAT BROAD



names, more descriptive than correct. 'The hunly fern as flars!' as I heard a Cockney crying in Yarmouth market, with that assurance of omniscience which is a Cockney's most valuable asset; just as I heard another, generous out of his abundance, correct an erring brother with 'A brike ain't a fern, I tell yer'. Well, a brake is, of course, as much a fern as *Osmunda* is not a flower. But *Osmunda* devotes a special frond to the work of reproduction, and there collects its spore-holding vessels; hence the popular name. Outside *Osmunda* and the common sorts, the Broads district has not much to show. There is no rock and little rain, two essentials to the thriving of the fern tribe. However, the marsh buckler (*Lastraea thelypteris*) is common, and the adder's tongue is plentiful in certain places—especially Hickling. In the heathy districts to the north the hard fern (*Lomaria spicant*) is very abundant.

With respect to the orchids there is a fair choice, though not of the more magnificent, albeit the particularly beautiful marsh helleborine is very abundant in the Ant district. In the spongy bogs where *Sphagnum* is still found are *Malaxis paludosa* and *Liparis Loeselii*. On the dryer heaths are *Listera ovata*, *Gymnadenia conopsea*, and *Spiranthes autumnalis*. In the Norwich district there are spots where the chalk outcrops and where the chalk-loving orchids may be found, but these hardly come within the scope of this chapter.

Orchids tend to decrease. There are those natural causes I have mentioned above, all working against the well-being of the orchid tribe. They are legitimate. But the people, crowel-armed, who, ankle-deep in mire, dig furiously at everything unhappy enough to bear the name of orchid, these are not legitimate, and ought to be extirpated before the orchid.



## CHAPTER XVIII

# A SKETCH OF THE GEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE BROADLAND

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THE Zoology and the Botany of the East Anglian Lakeland are each of them full of interest, but when these have been studied it may still be useful to inquire why the natural features of this region, to which the special character of its fauna and flora are largely due, differ so widely from those of other parts of Great Britain. For this purpose we must learn something of the strata by which it is underlain and of the physical changes which, in past ages, it has undergone. The subject is a large one, however, and can only be dealt with here in the most general way. One can only attempt rapidly to show, as by the shifting scenes of a panorama, the conditions of the district at some of the more important stages of its geological history.<sup>1</sup>

The principal strata which occur at or near the surface, or are known from borings, are given in the schedule on p. 272, their stratigraphical relation to each other being shown in the section (Fig. 1).

The deposition of the Chalk, the oldest of the rocks of this region, carries us back to a period incalculably remote although geologically very recent, when East Anglia, with other parts of the continent of Europe, was covered by the ocean; it belongs to the latest part of the Mesozoic or Secondary epoch, an age of great reptiles, or 'sea-serpents'—to speak more

<sup>1</sup> Those who desire to study the geology of the district more seriously are referred to an admirable résumé of the subject published by Mr. H. B. Woodward, F.R.S. in the *Victoria History of Norfolk*.

This geological cross-section illustrates the subsurface structure of the Yarmouth and Norwich region. The diagram is oriented with East (E) at the top and West (W) at the bottom. The primary geological features include:

- Recent Deposits:** Shown as a thin layer at the surface, with a thickness of 170 FT indicated near the Yarmouth area.
- Eocene Formation:** A thick, relatively uniform layer beneath the recent deposits.
- Chalk Formation:** A large, undulating mass beneath the Eocene, characterized by a wavy top surface. It is labeled 'CHALK' in the center.
- Norwich R Yare:** A river channel shown flowing through the Chalk formation, with 'Valley Deposits' indicated along its course.
- Acle:** A location marked on the northern side of the section.
- Gault Clay overlain by 8 feet of Sand:** A specific geological feature noted on the southern side of the section.
- Sea Level:** Indicated by a dashed line on the left side of the diagram.
- Elevations:** Specific points are marked at 170 FT and 526 FT.

FIG. 1.—SECTION SHOWING THE RELATION OF THE MORE RECENT DEPOSITS TO THOSE OF THE EOCENE PERIOD AND TO THE CHALK.

correctly, of sea-lizards (enaliosaurs)—and of flying dragons (pterodactyles). The skeleton of an animal of the former group, *Leiodon anceps*, was discovered some years since in a quarry at Norwich. The invertebrate fauna of the Mesozoic

Tertiary or Kainozoic	Recent	{	Blown sand, marine beaches, peat, estuarine and fresh-water deposits.
	Pleistocene	{	Valley gravels, etc.
			Plateau gravels.
			Chalky Boulder Clay.
			Middle Glacial Sand.
			Norwich Brick-earth.
			Contorted Drift of coast section.
			Cromer Till.
		{	Pebbly gravels and sand (Westleton Beds).
			<i>Leda myalis</i> Sands and Arctic fresh-water Beds.
	Pliocene	{	Forest-Bed series; estuarine and fresh-water.
Weybourne Crag (zone of <i>Tellina balthica</i> ) marine.			
Chillesford Clay; estuarine.			
Norwich Crag; marine.			
<i>Miocene</i>	{	<i>Not represented in East Anglia.</i>	
<i>Oligocene</i>			
Secondary or Mesozoic	Eocene	{	London Clay.
			Reading Beds.
	Cretaceous	{	Upper Chalk.

period was characterized by the great abundance and variety of its cephalopodous mollusca, among which the Ammonites may be specially mentioned.

The Chalk of the Broadland, belonging to the upper part of the Cretaceous formation, resembles, both in appearance and chemical composition, the calcareous ooze now forming at the bottom of the Atlantic. It may have accumulated under somewhat similar conditions in a sea of considerable depth and at some distance from land. Apart from the siliceous flint nodules everywhere present in it, generally in horizontal layers, it consists almost entirely of carbonate of lime, originating not from the degraded material of older rocks brought down by

ivers, but from the accumulated remains of minute organisms which lived in the Cretaceous sea. Among the more common invertebrate fossils of the Upper Chalk may be named *Belemnitella mucronata*, *Terebratula carnea*, *Rhynchonella plicatilis*, and *Ananchytes ovatus*.

The deposition of the calcareous ooze of the Atlantic at the present day seems to be exceedingly slow. At the first attempt to establish telegraphic communication between Europe and America, the cable broke in mid-ocean ; when the broken end was recovered, after an interval of some months, it was found that while the portion which had rested on the sea bottom was coated with chalky mud, no appreciable film had formed on the part which had lain uppermost. The deposition of the chalk, which at Norwich exceeds 1,200 feet in thickness, may have been somewhat more rapid, but if not, it probably represents a period to be measured in millions of years.

A reference to the diagram (Fig. 1) will show that the surface of the chalk forms a platform upon which the later deposits rest. Dipping to the east, the chalk disappears beneath the level of the river Yare a few miles below Norwich, but it may be studied in quarries at Thorpe, Whitlingham, and elsewhere near that city, at Coltishall in the Bure valley, and in the cliff section to the north-west of Cromer.

Our first panoramic glimpse of the geological history of the Broadland area is that of a deep rolling sea, an arm of the Atlantic, with no land in sight.

The scene changes. East Anglia has emerged, and forms part of the European continent, the ocean having retired far to the west. Such a state of things continued for a period of unknown duration, sufficiently protracted, however, to allow for the disappearance, not only of the reptilian fauna of the Mesozoic epoch, but of its more characteristic mollusca also. The Ammonites, just referred to, had in Secondary times a world-wide range ; but there is no evidence of their survival to the Tertiary period. Unfortunately, the geological record is silent as to the condition of East Anglia, or as to its fauna and flora, during the long interval separating the Secondary and Tertiary epochs.

The Tertiary period has at length dawned, and the eastern part of Norfolk and Suffolk is once more covered by the sea, though to a less depth than during the deposition of the Chalk.

No deposits of Older Tertiary (Eocene) age come to the surface in the Broadland, but strata, 51 feet in thickness, supposed to represent the Reading series, and 305 feet of London Clay, were met with in a well boring at Yarmouth, the surface of the Chalk upon which they were found to rest having been reached at a depth of 526 feet below sea-level (Fig. 1).

The land then lay to the west, probably at no great distance, while a large river brought into the East Anglian area sediment, first more or less sandy, and afterwards of fine mud. Farther south, beds of rolled pebbles were formed of flints derived from the destruction of the chalk cliffs, then forming the sea margin.

The climate of Britain was then much warmer than it is now; turtles and crocodiles, palms and bananas, flourished in these latitudes, while the mollusca which swarmed in the rivers, estuaries, and seas were allied to those now found in tropical or subtropical regions.

Placental mammals, of a more generalized character, however, than those of the present, make their first recorded appearance, in great variety and abundance, in the Eocene deposits. All that are known from Secondary strata are aplacental, a lower as well as an older type of animal life, now confined to Australia and South America, which is represented by the marsupials and monotremes of those countries. We have comparatively little information as to the mammalia of Great Britain at this time; but the fossil remains of *Palaeotherium*, *Anoplotherium*, *Xiphodon*, and other well-known forms, are found in France, in rocks of a somewhat later (Oligocene) date. Such animals may not improbably have then existed in the Broadland area.

The distribution of land and water during the Eocene period differed widely from that of our own time. From the south and east of England the sea extended in one direction over the north of France, and in another into Belgium. The Atlantic was connected with the Pacific by an ocean which



stretched across the Mediterranean region, over the south of Europe and the north of Africa, into Asia Minor, Arabia, Persia, to the Himalayas, and thence to Sumatra, Borneo, and the Philippines.<sup>1</sup>

Once more the Broad district became land, the sea retiring from it, though not far, and such conditions persisted during the Oligocene, Miocene, and older Pliocene epochs.

With the advent of the newer Pliocene, represented in East Anglia by the Crag formation, famed for the beauty and variety of its fossils, and by the so-called Forest Bed, modern geological history commences. At that time the map of north-western Europe had acquired generally its present form; animals and plants of existing genera, and often of existing species, inhabited the British Isles, while the molluscan fauna of the North Sea closely resembled that of European seas at the present day.

The upper horizons of the deposits referred to, known as the Red and Norwich Crags, consist of sand, often containing in great profusion the drifted shells of dead mollusca. Although to a great extent hidden by the glacial strata overlying them, they cover a considerable part of the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk as with a sheet, more or less continuous for fifty miles from south to north, representing the littoral accumulation during Pliocene times of the North Sea, which then extended somewhat farther to the west than it does at present. The richness of the invertebrate fauna of the Pliocene sea of East Anglia may be shown by the fact that the writer has collected from one small exposure of the Essex Crag, not larger than a good-sized dining-room, more than five hundred different species or well-marked varieties of mollusca, polyzoa, etc.

In consequence of a combined movement of elevation in the southern part of this region, and of subsidence towards the north, the whole Crag basin moving as on a pivot, its southern margin was gradually shifted, the sea retiring towards the north. The upper Crag beds, originating upon or near the shore as beaches or shoals in shallow water, indicate

<sup>1</sup> The geographical conditions of the Cretaceous and Eocene periods are more fully discussed by Mr. A. J. Jukes-Browne, F.G.S., in the *Student's Handbook of Stratigraphical Geology* (Stanford).

successive stages of this movement. Hence it is that the older of these deposits are to be found in the south of the Crag area, the newer in the north. Moreover, during this epoch the climate of the northern hemisphere was gradually changing, becoming colder as the Glacial Period approached. The earlier horizons of the Crag contain a molluscan fauna more or less allied to that of the Mediterranean at present. As time went on, the southern shells died out, their place being taken by northern and Arctic species which invaded the North Sea from the north. The fauna of these strata assumes, therefore, a more boreal facies as we trace them from Essex northward. The Crag beds of the Broadland belong to the Norwich, Chillesford, and Weybourne zones, the most recent of the series. The first-named may be observed in a quarry near Thorpe Asylum, and sometimes, when not obscured by talus, in the historic pit close to the river Yare, at Bramerton, a few miles from Norwich. The Weybourne Crag, characterized by the earliest appearance and great abundance of a shell still living in the North Sea, *Tellina balthica*, may be seen at Weybourne and other points on the Cromer coast.

The fossils of the older horizons of the Crag are more varied and interesting than those of the Broadland area, for the same reason that the conchology of the Mediterranean at the present day is of a richer character than that of British seas, and their mollusca or polyzoa may be more conveniently studied from centres like Aldeburgh, or Orford, on the Suffolk coast, than in Norfolk. Important collections of Crag fossils are to be found, however, in the Castle Museum at Norwich.

At present, dead shells are but rarely met with on the eastern shores of Norfolk and Suffolk. One may sometimes walk for a mile at Yarmouth or Lowestoft without finding more than a chance specimen, but they are cast upon the Dutch coast, or driven into the estuaries of that country, in enormous quantities, being collected there for the manufacture of lime; 100,000 tons of shells are annually dredged for this purpose, for example, from one spot near the Hook of Holland.

The abundance of dead shells on the Dutch coasts, and their comparative absence from the beaches of East Anglia that face the east, seem to be equally due to the fact that the

cyclonic disturbances which approach this country from the Atlantic pass for the most part, especially during winter, when storms are most frequent, with their centres to the north of the region in question. Hence gales there occurring are generally westerly (from south-west to north-west), and dead shells are driven towards the shores of Holland rather than towards those of Norfolk and Suffolk.

It seems necessary, therefore, to suppose that the prevalent direction of the strongest gales may have been from the east during the later part of the Crag period. The study of the meteorology of the Pliocene epoch suggests that such may have been the case, the cyclone tracks then lying farther to the south, owing to a difference in the relative distribution of the areas of high and low barometric pressure.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the Pliocene period the North Sea received, as it now does, the drainage of the Rhine and its affluents. Deep borings show that Holland is underlain by deposits of sand or clay of great thickness, the Rhine mud of a former epoch. The Netherlands thus represent the old delta of that river, of which the latest Crag beds of East Anglia may have formed the western edge.

At one stage of the Pliocene history, that represented by the Chillesford Clay, when the land stood somewhat higher and the North Sea lay farther to the north than during the deposition of the Norwich Crag, an estuary existed in the Broadland, which was possibly one of the channels by which the great southern river reached the sea. The Chillesford Clay is shown in a brickyard near Wroxham station, from whence it may be traced along a sinuous line into East Suffolk. It is generally characterized by the abundant presence of minute flakes of mica, derived, it is suggested, from the Devonian schists of the Ardennes, or from micaceous rocks farther south.

During the deposition of the so-called Forest-Bed of the Cromer coast, at a period somewhat later than that of the Chillesford Clay, the Rhine once more flowed over East Anglia,

<sup>1</sup> As to this, see a paper by the present writer, 'On the Influence of the Winds upon Climate during the Pleistocene Epoch', *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society*, vol. lvii, p. 407. 1901.

but at this stage its course lay farther to the east. The estuarine part of the Forest Bed series, a deposit now of gravel and again of clay, is exposed from time to time at the base of the cliffs at various parts of the coast, as between Cromer and Hasboro' in Norfolk, or at Corton and Kessingland in Suffolk. It contains the stools of trees, generally of spruce or Scotch fir, with many mammalian fossils, especially of two large elephants, *Elephas antiquus* and *E. meridionalis*, and of different species of deer. Remains of bear, hyena, machairodus (a large extinct carnivore allied to the tiger), hippopotamus, rhinoceros, and other animals have also been found in it, some of them allied to forms now living to the south of Great Britain. A few specimens of distinctly northern species, such as the musk ox, *Ovibos moschatus*, and the glutton, have been met with, but generally the mammalia are of a southern character.

The Forest Bed and its fauna were at one time supposed to represent the site and the animal life of a former East Anglian woodland. The tree stumps, however, are not found in place, but have been drifted; the fossil remains of the larger mammalia never occur as perfect skeletons, but as isolated and often fragmentary bones or teeth. It seems possible, therefore, that some of the southern species may represent the fauna of regions to the south rather than that of Norfolk and Suffolk. Animals browsing in herds on the low grounds bordering the great southern river may have been from time to time overtaken and swept away by sudden and violent floods, their remains being in this way carried down to their present resting-place. There are interesting collections of Forest Bed fossils in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, and in the Castle Museum at Norwich.

Associated with these estuarine deposits are some of a fresh-water character, implying slight changes in the position of the Rhine, and probably in the level of the land. The area which was at one time occupied by the estuary and its mud-flats became, as the course of the Rhine was shifted to the east, a region of marsh and bog, and of shallow lakes.

Our bird's-eye view of Norfolk at this period is one of low, sandy plains, probably covered by woods of Scotch fir



or of spruce, with groves of beech, oak, or elm in places, and a tangled undergrowth of hawthorn, bramble, and hazel. On the west, rolling chalk downs ; on the east, Broads and swamps filled with aquatic plants such as now live in the district, and fringed with thickets of alder, willow, and birch. Farther to the east lay the great estuary, often swollen and turbid, and then sweeping down, with other flotsam and jetsam, the stools of trees torn from its undermined banks, and from time to time the carcasses of elephant or deer. Beyond the river, a vast plain, now covered by the sea, but at that time dark with pine forests, stretched eastward to the distant horizon, and thence to Holland.

The plant and animal life of East Anglia at this period was varied and abundant.<sup>1</sup> The Broads and streams, which then as now swarmed with fish—pike, bream, perch, and roach—were margined with the water-lily and the water-plantain, and with masses of dock, sedge, and reed. The marshes were gay with meadow-rue and cotton-grass, and with buttercups and the golden flowers of the *Caltha*, while here and there arose a great clump of the royal *Osmunda*. Flocks of geese and wild duck, undisturbed by sportsman or tourist, made their home in these inland waters ; while in the evening, the owl, on noiseless wing, scoured the country in search of its prey. Squirrels flitted through the trees, and frogs croaked in the damp meadows, dotted then, as they are to-day, by the rounded hillocks of the mole. From their holes in the river banks, or their lairs in the reed-beds, otters issued for their nightly fishing, while beavers were busy in the construction of their dams. Smaller animals, such as mice, shrews, and water-voles, abounded, and the poisonous adder lurked in the woods.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Our knowledge of the flora of the Forest-Bed deposits is largely due to the researches of Mr. Clement Reid, F.R.S.

<sup>2</sup> Those who desire further information as to the Crag and Forest Bed, are referred to Mr. Reid's ' Pliocene Deposits of Britain ' (*Memoirs of the Geological Survey*), which contains the opinions of that gentleman at the time of its appearance in 1890. The views of the present writer are more fully stated in three papers published in the *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society*, vols. lii, p. 748, liv, p. 308, and lvi, p. 705. 1896, 1898, and 1900. A summary of these appeared in the *Proceedings of the Geologists' Association*, London, vol. xvii, p. 416. 1902.



Such was then the aspect of the Broadland, presenting more or less the features which were in after-times to make it famous ; but once more the scene changes. The climate of the northern hemisphere has now become of Arctic severity, and the Great Ice Age is holding East Anglia in its wintry grasp. Enormous glaciers are issuing from the Scandinavian fiords ; the northern part of the North Sea is blocked with ice, a great lake possibly existing towards the south, into which the summer drainage of the Rhine was poured. The disturbing influence of the North Sea ice is evidenced by the contortions which may be observed in the Cliff section near Cromer. At one stage of the Glacial Period the masses of snow and ice which accumulated on the hilly and mountainous regions of England and Scotland sent out great ice streams towards the lower ground. In the opinion of my friend and coadjutor, the late Searles V. Wood, jun., one of these, the ' Great Eastern Glacier ', descended from Lincolnshire, travelling southwards between the Chalk Wolds and the Oolitic escarpment (the Lincoln Heights). Spreading itself out like a fan as it reached East Anglia, it extended as far as Yarmouth in one direction, the Thames valley in another, and into the midland counties in a third. A thick sheet of clay, possibly the *moraine profonde* of this ice stream, covers a great part of the eastern counties of England. This deposit, called by Wood the ' Chalky Boulder Clay ', consists of material derived from the degradation of the various Cretaceous and Jurassic rocks over which the ice moved. It is absent from the north-eastern part of Norfolk, the region lying between Norwich and Cromer. The ice to which the Chalky Boulder Clay was due could not, therefore, have come from the direction of the North Sea, as has been sometimes supposed (Fig. 2).

Interesting exposures of the glacial deposits of the Broadland may be seen in the cliff sections of the Cromer and Lowestoft coasts.

As the Glacial Period waned, and the ice melted over the higher parts of Norfolk, it seems to have shrunk into the valleys, eroding and deepening them ; patches of boulder clay being found in many places at the valley bottoms. A glacier appears, for example, to have moved down the valley of the

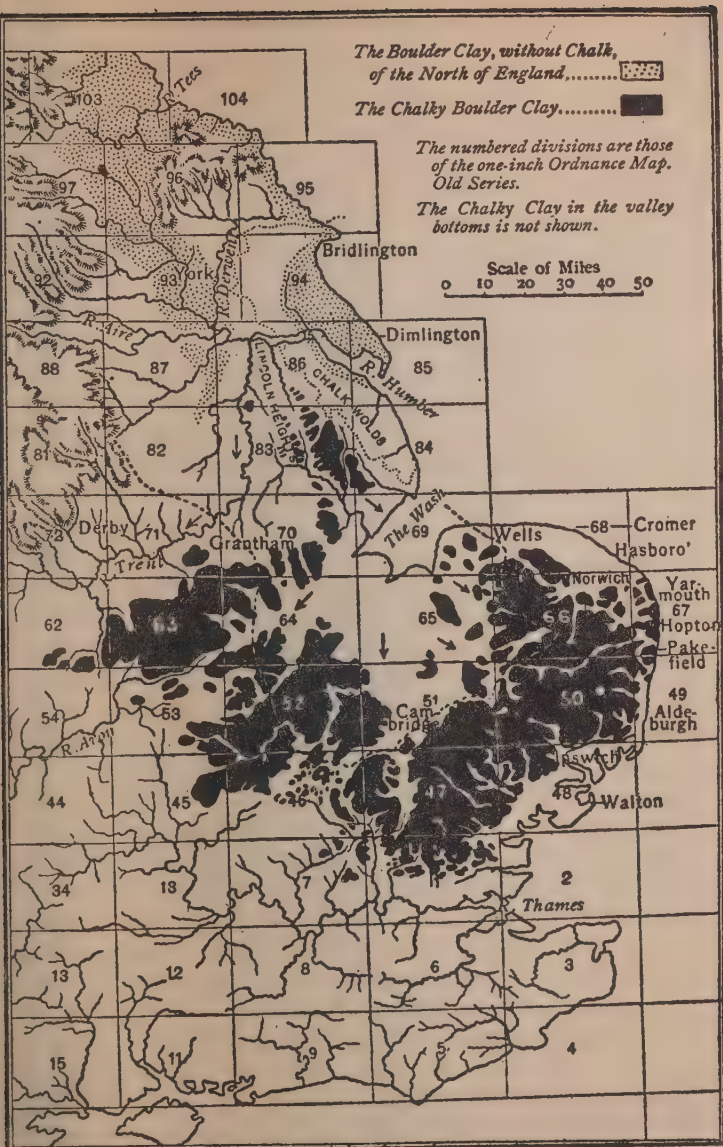


FIG. 2.—MAP SHOWING THE EXTENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE CHALKY BOULDER CLAY, THE MORAINIC DETRITUS, ACCORDING TO SEARLES V. WOOD, JUN., OF THE GREAT EASTERN GLACIER. THE SUPPOSED DIRECTION OF THE ICE-FLOW IS INDICATED BY ARROWS.

Yare, eastward from Norwich. At a quarry in the parish of Whitlingham, on the south bank of the river, the chalk has been greatly disturbed, the lines of flint in it, originally horizontal, having been forced up into an anticlinal (Fig. 3). At Thorpe, immediately opposite, on the north bank, the glacial beds present similar evidence of disturbance; while on the low ground, within the valley, boulder clay rests on the glaciated surface of the chalk.

Another transformation. The Glacial Epoch is rapidly passing away. Floods of great violence, due partly to the melting of the ice and partly to meteorological disturbances of greater intensity than those of our own times, ravaged the eastern counties, at one time heaping up in places coarse flint gravel, as may be seen in some large excavations near the Infantry Barracks at Norwich; at another, carving out of the morainic detritus left by the ice the diversified and picturesque scenery of Norfolk and Suffolk. The constant alternation of hill and dale, the size and number of the valleys by which the district is intersected, out of all proportion to its area, or to the streams which flow, or ever could have flowed, in them, and the masses of flint gravel just referred to, could not have originated under conditions similar to those which now prevail, however prolonged.

No conclusive evidence that man existed in the Broadland before the Glacial Epoch has yet been obtained, though it is believed by some geologists that such may have been the case. There is no doubt, however, that an immigration of uncivilized folk into East Anglia took place shortly after its close. Savage tribes, ignorant of the use of metals, possibly driven northward by the pressure of stronger races, followed the retreating ice into these then inhospitable regions; for the same reason, a similar race of men, the Eskimo, have now wandered to the far north. Here and there evidence of the former existence of these Palaeolithic men occurs in the Post-Glacial deposits of the district. One symmetrically formed unpolished flint hatchet was found by the writer many years ago in the gravels of the Yare valley at Cringleford, three miles south of Norwich. At Hoxne, in the Waveney valley



FIG. 3. SHOWING THE DISTURBANCE OF THE CHALK AND OF THE CRAG BEDS OVERLYING IT, BY THE YARE GLACIER, IN A QUARRY AT WHITLINGHAM, NEAR NORWICH





at which place there must have been at this period a settlement of such people, many flint implements have been found, and they have also been met with in river gravels near Thetford and Brandon. At a later period the Palaeolithic men were displaced and possibly driven northward by the arrival in England of the Neolithic races, who used polished weapons and were in other respects more civilized than their predecessors. The further discussion of this branch of the subject belongs, however, to the archaeologist.

Borings which have been made in the low ground bordering the Yare and the Wensum show not only that the original valleys are much wider than the narrow channels in which those rivers now run, but that they have been excavated to a depth considerably below sea-level. They are generally filled with peat, underlain by gravel, which latter reaches in places a height of twenty-five feet or more above that of the highest floods of the present day. An exposure of these gravels may be seen on the right hand as the train leaves Thorpe station (Norwich).

As the excavating power of water depends more or less upon the gradient, it follows that the formation or deepening of the valleys, so far as this was due to the action of running water, could only have taken place when the land stood relatively to the sea at a higher level than it does now. The height to which the valley gravels extend shows equally that the floods to which they were due were of greater volume than any which now occur. England may have been at this time joined to the Continent, and the torrents which then swept through Norfolk and Suffolk may have mingled in their later course with those of the Rhine.

The valley gravels thus represent a period of greater elevation. A later stage, however, in the evolution of the Broadland was accompanied by subsidence, during which the North Sea invaded its former basin, gradually creeping up the Norfolk valleys, converting the lower part of them into estuaries. Estuarine conditions continue to this day in the southern part of East Anglia, as in those of the Orwell and the Stour. It may be interesting to inquire why the development of the latter has been arrested at this stage,

while the valleys of the Broadland are choked with sediment or peat.

The constant encroachment of the sea upon those parts of the coast that are exposed to the tidal scour is a fact only too well known to the unfortunate owners of the land, the waste being often greater where the cliffs are high. So long as the latter are buttressed by talus, or by the accumulation of beach, they are safe ; but when these are eaten away by the waves, and the cliff acquires a face more or less vertical, it falls by its own weight, its disintegration being hastened by the action of land-springs. The fallen material protects it for a time, but eventually history repeats itself, and a further strip of land falls a prey to the hungry sea.

A considerable portion of the material derived from this waste of the land remains upon or near the shore, accumulating principally at comparatively sheltered spots. From another portion, however, have been formed those long, narrow sand-banks which fringe certain parts of the coast, lying parallel to it, at no great distance from the shore.

As is well known, the beaches of the eastern coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk have a tendency to travel from north to south, the currents running in that direction—those of the flowing tide—being the stronger. Efforts are frequently made to arrest this coastal movement, and so to cause accumulation at certain points by the construction of groynes ; but the protection of one spot is gained at the expense of other localities. Lowestoft affords a striking instance of this. The two long piers which enclose the harbour at that place form a gigantic groyne. Large quantities of sand are constantly accumulating therefore to the north of the north pier, a sandy plain extending from the pier head to the foot of the cliffs (the sea margin of a former period), upon which the old town of Lowestoft stands. On the contrary, little or no sediment can reach the shore to the south of the south pier, and the local authorities so far as they are there endeavouring to protect the cliffs by groynes, seem to be engaged in an unequal and hopeless struggle.

The amount of material available for the formation of beach is strictly limited, depending on the waste going on toward

the north. Where the cliffs are composed of sand, the beaches lying to the south are more or less sandy; where of gravel, they are stony. An example of the latter state of things is presented by the great shingle bank (derived from the pebble beds of a former extension of Dunwich cliff, now destroyed) which extends southward from Aldeburgh in Suffolk. The river Alde approaches the sea at right angles, immediately to the south of the latter town, until within about one hundred yards of it. It then turns abruptly to the south and runs parallel to the shore, and near it, finally reaching the sea at Hollesley, nine miles to the south-west. It is the gradual travel of the beach southward, and the accumulation of the shingle bank between the river and the sea, that has altered the course of the Alde. Similarly, the destruction of the cliffs of North Norfolk in former times has given rise to the great sand-bank upon which Yarmouth has been built. Until this bank had finally established itself across the mouth of the Yare estuary, the tidal currents kept possession of its V-shaped valleys, heaping themselves up inland at high water, where the valleys become narrower, to a level higher than that of the sea outside. Were it not for the existence of this sand-bank, and the fact that the influx of the flowing tide is now confined to the narrow channel of the river between Gorleston and Yarmouth, similar conditions would obtain at present.

The estuarine condition of the Broadland valleys may have continued until a comparatively recent period, as suggested by Samuel Woodward in a map of Roman Norfolk published in 1833.<sup>1</sup> Such a view is supported by the positions chosen by the Romans for their camps at Burgh, Caister, and elsewhere. There is an old map in Yarmouth (the Hutch map) which shows a similar state of things as existing in Norman times. In the district known as the Flegg Hundred, a triangular area in East Norfolk, bounded by the river Bure and the Hundred stream (Fig. 4), most of the names of the villages end in *by*, a proof of their Danish origin, while the majority of those on the opposite bank of the Bure have Saxon terminations.<sup>2</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> *Archæologia*, vol. xxiii, p. 358. 1833.

<sup>2</sup> Thurne, Repps, and Bastwick are also Danish, and possibly Runham and Martham, the latter being, in the late Mr. Walter Rye's opinion, corruptions of Runholm and Martholm.

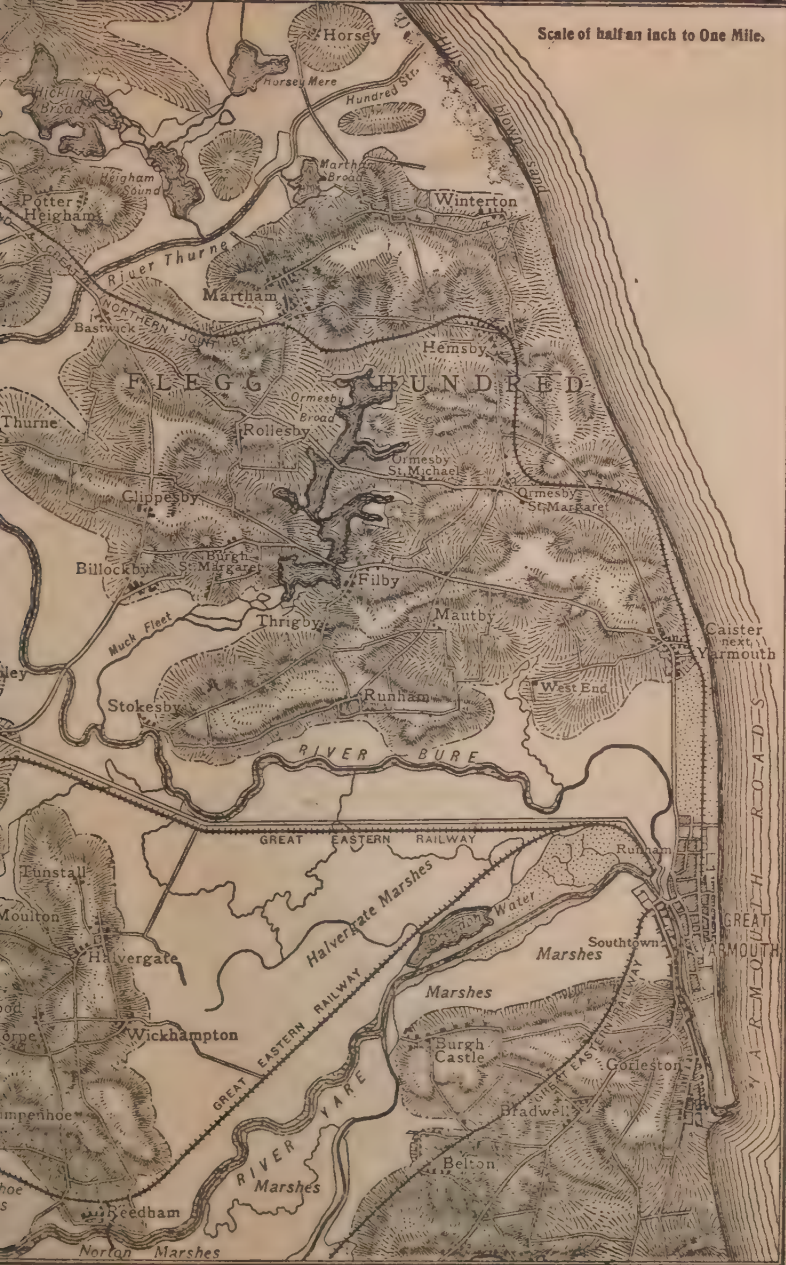
would seem, therefore, that in those troublous times the Flegg Hundred may have formed a region marked off by some natural boundary, which served to protect its inhabitants from sudden attack. Moreover, the *Saxon Chronicle* states that in A.D. 1004, Sweyn, with thirty ships, plundered and burned Norwich, marching afterwards from thence to Thetford. The inference has been drawn that the failure of a Saxon attack on the ships, in the absence of many of their defenders, may have been due to the estuarine condition of the Wensum valley at Norwich at that period.

There is no evidence to show when the Yarmouth sandbank began to accumulate. Originating first as a submarine shoal, it grew until, at some time previous to the Norman Conquest, it had become an island frequented by fishermen. We learn from the report of a survey made by Edward the Confessor, about A.D. 1050, published in Domesday Book, that Yarmouth had then seventy burgesses. The sandbank may at that time have obstructed, though it did not wholly prevent, the daily flow of the tidal water into the estuary. That this was so is further shown by the existence of *salinae* pans for evaporating salt water, which are recorded as having then existed at Halvergate and Cantley, in the Yare valley, and in that of the Bure at Runham, South Walsham, and other places some miles inland.

The protracted struggle between the growth of the Yarmouth sandbank and the scour of the tidal currents marks another stage in the history of the Broadland. Gradually but irresistibly creeping southward, the sand drove the mouth of the Yare before it. At one time the river reached as far as Corton, a few miles north of Lowestoft, but in the sixteenth century an artificial opening to the sea was made for it at Gorleston; its farther progress towards the south is now barred by the piers at the latter place. Accumulation is taking place to the north of these piers, as at Lowestoft, and the cliffs to the south of them are wasting. All trace of the former channel of the Yare, for example, to the south of Gorleston, has been destroyed by the encroachment of the sea (Fig. 4).

The conditions of the valleys of the Stour and Orwell, of the Alde, and of those of the Bure and the Yare, thus represent





SHOWING THE SITE OF A PORTION OF THE ANCIENT ESTUARIES OF THE VALLEYS OF  
YARE AND THE BURE, AND THE WAY BY WHICH THE SEA HAS BEEN EXCLUDED FROM  
M BY THE GRADUAL ACCUMULATION OF THE YARMOUTH SAND-BANKS.



successive stages in the process by which the Broads have acquired their present features. The first-named are still open to the sea, because a smaller amount of material derived from the waste of the coast immediately to the north of them is there available. Similar causes are at work, however. A sandy spit extends southward from Felixstowe toward the mouth of the estuary of the Stour, and many submerged sand-banks exist in the offing. The access of the tidal currents to these valleys is, however, for the present unobstructed.

For a long time the river Bure kept for itself an opening to the sea to the north of Yarmouth, but this was finally silted up in the fourteenth century. With the exclusion of the sea from the estuary of the Yare by the blocking of its northern mouth, and of any similar opening which may have existed between Horsey and Winterton, the final stage in the evolution of the Broads commenced. Towards the sea, sediment, consisting partly of mud brought down by the rivers, which are turbid when in flood, and partly of tidal silt, was deposited in sheltered places as banks or shoals. Such deposition is still going on, as for example in Breydon Water, over the mud flats of which, as Mr. A. Patterson informs me, a small boat can hardly pass now where thirty-five years ago a wherry could sail.

Farther inland, beyond the point to which the tidal waters could penetrate, aquatic vegetation flourished in the water-logged soil and along the banks or the shallower parts of the streams.

The first effect of the exclusion of the swiftly flowing tidal currents from the valleys of the Broadland was to transform all the land below a certain level into a sheet, or possibly into several sheets, of inland water, which gradually became smaller, and were finally reduced to a series of lakelets, by the deposition of mud and the accumulation of decaying vegetation. At a later stage, and by a similar process, impassable swamps became meadows, and cattle now graze in the former haunts of the crane and the bittern.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Breydon is the shrunken representation of the large sheet of water which must at one time have covered the low ground shown in the map (Fig. 4) extending from Yarmouth to beyond Reedham in one direction and to the north of Acle in another.

From the valleys of the Waveney and the Yare fresh-water lakes have nearly disappeared. The Broads of Rockland and Surlingham in the latter are gradually becoming smaller. Marshes, protected from inundation, during the summer at least, by river banks, extend from Norwich and Bungay to Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Along the Bure, however, Broads still exist, occupying possibly the deeper parts of the old valley, holes which have not yet been filled up. The agencies by the operation of which they came into existence are still at work, and will eventually bring them to an end, the more quickly perhaps because the rivers, the current of which tends to keep their own channels open, do not run through the Broads, but past them.<sup>1</sup>

A portion of the Broadland, that traversed by the Hundred stream (Fig. 4), once open to the sea, is now protected from its incursion by hills of blown sand and by the sandy beach accumulating at their base. The sand dunes at this spot, however, are being gradually moved inland by the agency of the winds, the sea following. When Sir Charles Lyell visited Norfolk in 1839, he found the ruined church tower of Eccles (a small village on the coast to the south-east of Hasboro') half-buried in the sandhills.<sup>2</sup> Twelve years afterwards, the latter having shifted, it stood clear of them to seaward, and it has since been entirely destroyed by the waves. Compared with the enormous dunes of some parts of the Dutch coast, which are two miles in width, for example, in the island of Texel, our own sandhills afford a less secure protection to this part of the Broadland than could be desired. Much of the land is there below the level of high water, and were a breach in the cliffs once made, the sea would take possession of the lower reaches of the Bure valley, and again convert the old Danish settlement of the Flegg Hundred into an island. It is probable that the safety of the district depends as much on

<sup>1</sup> A comparison of the recent maps of the Ordnance Survey with those issued half a century ago will show that the Broads, taken as a whole, have been considerably reduced in extent during recent years.

<sup>2</sup> *Principles of Geology*, 10th ed., vol. i, p. 513. The late Mr. Walter Rye informed me that a patent for the erection of this church on a new site was granted in 1338, the one previously existing at Eccles having been destroyed by the sea.

the stability of the beach at this point, as on that of the sand-cliffs ; but step by step the sea is gaining on the land, and it is to be feared that nothing can permanently prevent its continued encroachment. A visit to this locality may be made by the tourist by way of the Hundred stream, which is navigable in a small boat to within a short distance of the coast.

The present conditions of the Broadland, with their unique and seductive beauty, represent one only out of the many fleeting episodes of its long history. Past ages have brought it never-ceasing change, change of regeneration, however, as well as of decay. What may be in store for it in the more distant future we cannot tell, but to-day natural forces are working towards the obliteration of its distinctive features, while the remorseless sea is threatening its very existence. Fortunately ' the mills of God grind slowly ', and the East Anglian people, as well as the visitors they yearly welcome, may still hope to enjoy, for some generations to come, their much-valued heritage.

CHAPTER XIX  
ARCHAEOLOGY

By W. A. DUTT

**I**N the year 1797 a discovery was made at Hoxne, in the upper part of the Waveney valley, which attracted little attention at the time, and it was not until more than sixty years later, when similar discoveries were made by a French antiquary in the valley of the Somme, that interest in the earlier event was reawakened and its importance recognized. This was the finding, by Mr. John Frere, of many flint implements of Palaeolithic type in a Hoxne clay-pit which then, as now, was being worked for brick-making. The long disputations, keen and often acrimonious, that took place before these flints were admitted to be of human shaping, and significant of man's presence on the earth, and in this part of England, at a period infinitely remote compared with that formerly assigned to it, is now familiar archaeological history. Hoxne is situated higher up the Waveney than it is navigable by cruisers in Broadland ; but some of them who are interested in the existence of, and problems presented by, early man may like to be reminded that in the valley of the Waveney they are in a neighbourhood in which the Early Stone Age huntsmen roved at a time when Great Britain was still connected by a land link with the continent of Europe.

In the Broadland valleys, however, Palaeolithic implements have been found in no such great numbers as in the western parts of Norfolk and Suffolk unless—as some have contended—many of the implements found on the surface of the ground, or just beneath it, and which are not only often of Palaeolithic forms, but also are frequently marked with conspicuous glacial striations, are of much earlier date than the recognized Neolithic implements with which they are often associated. Neolithic man, however, has left abundant traces of his presence in the district, for there is scarcely a ploughed field along the

valley borders in which implements of his making cannot be picked up and where the flint-flakes struck off in the making of them cannot be found. Apart from these enduring relics of the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the district slight, if any, traces of them are now discoverable. They probably belonged to what is now generally distinguished as the Mediterranean race, which, in prehistoric times, was represented in England by a small, dark people who carried on a primitive agriculture and domesticated certain animals. Some pits formerly to be seen on Mousehold Heath, near Norwich, and on Marsham Heath, near Aylsham, may have been the remains of some of their dwellings. In south-west Norfolk, at Weeting, extensive flint-quarries known as 'Grimes Graves' were worked by them, though recent discoveries there suggest that the workings may date from a transition period between the Palaeolithic and Neolithic. It seems likely that, owing to their usefulness as land-workers, these pre-Celtic folk were not exterminated by later settlers here, and in most of the rural parts of East Anglia small, dark-haired people, very different from the recognized Celtic, Anglian, and Scandinavian types, may be met with and may be descendants of the Neolithic folk whom in stature and skull-formation they so closely resemble.

On Broome Heath, near Bungay, there were formerly several barrows ; but when I last visited the heath there were only two remaining, the others having been obliterated by the plough. One of them was opened in 1858, and a skeleton, probably of Bronze Age date, was found in it. Near by it there are faint traces still of what appears to have been an oval enclosure consisting of a low earthen rampart with outer ditch ; and I can remember the time when some other interesting remains of earthworks, including a circular mound surrounded by a ditch, adjoined it ; but these have now almost disappeared. These Broome earthworks seem to have had some relation to a prehistoric trackway that later became a Roman road and which crossed the Waveney at Wainford, near by.

Of greater interest to any one studying the prehistory of this neighbourhood is Bungay Common, for here a prehistoric settlement, occupying the higher ground of the area almost encircled by a horseshoe-shaped bend of the Waveney, was



formerly defended and insulated by a deep ditch which, in the days when the river was much wider than it is now, extended right across the neck of the promontory. This ditch ran parallel with the present railway, and was partly demolished when the line was constructed. Subsequently the western end of the ditch was filled up and only slight traces now remain of it ; but I can recollect the time when rolling down its fairly steep sides was a popular amusement with Bungay schoolboys. There were then some remains of a rectangular enclosure, which, before the railway cutting was made, probably adjoined the long ditch, and on the site of the present goods station four artificial mounds, which were probably barrows, previously existed. On the common itself my own ' finds ' have included a fine polished flint axe, a beautifully chipped triangular flint knife, and a vertebra and one of the toe phalanges of a girl or small woman who was probably a prehistoric inhabitant of the site. Almost everywhere where the surface soil of the common is disturbed the ' pot stones ' used by prehistoric man for warming water occur, together with flint-cores and flakes. In 1907, a sandy hollow there was discovered by the writer to be littered with minute flint-flakes, including several which had been shaped by chipping into tiny implements identical with many of the so-called ' pigmy flints ' recorded from various localities. All appeared to come from a Neolithic ' floor ' about eighteen inches from the surface of the ground.

According to Samuel Woodward, who refers to it in a paper read before the Society of Antiquaries in 1830, a neck of land in the parish of Horning, in the Bure valley, was insulated by a long line or earthwork ' in a similar way to the Bungay promontory.

One of the most puzzling earthworks of the Broads district is the ' Bell Hill ' in the parish of Fritton. Here we have a mound much higher than any barrow I have seen in East Anglia, yet with too small a summit to have served for building on, as in the case of a castle mount or ' mote castle '. It is an irregularly round mount formed by the artificial insulating of the terminal portion of a tongue of land projecting into the marshland by the excavation of a wide fosse around about a quarter of its circumference, the earth from the fosse being apparently used to heighten the sides and summit of the

mound, which has a considerable depression in its centre. The digging of this fosse must have caused the mount to be surrounded by water when the valley was part of an estuary. Its old name, with that of the adjoining parish of Belton, may be compared with Belford and Bellingham, in Northumberland, where there are several prehistoric earthworks; also with Beltout, the Sussex hill-fort, and with several other Bell Hills in different parts of the country. Taylor, in his *Words and Places*, looks upon the frequently recurring 'Bell Hill' among ancient mounts as being connected with the Celtic worship of Bel, or Belan, whom the Romans in Britain recognized as a god of war and adopted as 'Mars Belatucradus', the 'brilliant in battle'. Bellona, too, the Roman goddess of war, had altars in Britain and probably a temple in York, so there may be some significance in the name of Bell Hill and Belton in relation with the Roman *castellum* of *Garianonum* in the adjoining parish of Burgh Castle. Roman coins, I am credibly informed, have been found on the summit of the mount; but this, of course, does not discredit the idea that it may have been a pre-Roman site devoted to fire, or some other form of pagan worship. Its situation is such that any rites performed on it could have been witnessed by a large number of worshippers assembled on the 'mainland' side of the water-filled fosse. Flint implements have been found on the neighbouring heaths and warrens, the highly finished workmanship of some of them being characteristic of those found associated with Bronze Age burials. Remarkably fine axes, both chipped and ground, have been discovered at the Lound end of Fritton Lake, and at Somerleyton, near by, a fine hoard of Bronze Age implements was recently brought to light. Nearly a century ago traces of what may have been a pile dwelling similar to those found in the Wretham Meres were discovered in Lound Water; but unfortunately the discoverer of them was so engrossed with hunting for treasure believed to have been sunk there by smugglers that he failed to communicate his discovery to any one at the time, and information about it is very vague.

Two or three other earthworks in the district may be mentioned. The huge mound on which Norwich Castle stands is probably only partly artificial. It seems to have originally

formed the end of a ridge of upland and to have been at some time cut off from it by the digging of a fosse and then steeply scarped. At Bungay an early mount on which a Norman castle was erected is now surrounded by a perpendicular wall of flints. Formerly the earthworks here consisted of the mount and the ramparts enclosing two base-courts; but large portions of these works have been demolished to permit of building operations. Here, as at Broome, near by, the earthworks occupy a position commanding an ancient ford over the Waveney, and in some form or other they may have existed before the erection of the Norman castle. In the parish of North Cove there are some traces of a circular entrenchment just on the border of the Waveney marshlands. According to Mr. J. C. Wall, who refers to it in the *Victoria County History of Suffolk*, it has been much trodden down by cattle. It adjoins an old farmhouse known as Wade or Wathe Hall, and an earlier house, said to have been the seat of the Wathe family, is believed to have stood within the entrenchment, where remains of foundations have been found, also Roman bricks, an antique key and other antiquities'.

Stone circles, dolmens, and menhirs are not to be found in the Broads district, nor, indeed, in any part of Norfolk or Suffolk. The absence of such rude monuments is sufficiently explained by the fact that material suitable for the construction of megaliths does not occur in eastern England, though there can be little doubt that the race or races responsible for the erection of them inhabited this part of England. It is recorded, however, by a Yarmouth historian that a circle of massive stones ten feet high stood in a field called Stone Close in the parish of Gorleston until 1768, when it was destroyed, and if such was the case the stones had probably been brought there by a people who are known to have been capable of transporting such monoliths considerable distances; but there is some reason for believing that the recognized megalithic race, and probably other peoples who succeeded them in the occupation of this part of the country, found a local substitute for the rock material elsewhere utilized for standing stones in the large ice-borne boulders that the waning of glacial conditions left scattered widespread over the surface

of the land or embedded in the boulder clay. A considerable number of such boulders are even now to be seen lying or set up in places to which they appear to have been removed to serve some definite purpose, and in some instances curious folk-tales attach to them. In a monograph<sup>1</sup> on this subject I have dealt fairly fully with these stones and their significance. There is much evidence that some of them are pagan 'sacred stones' worshipped by the Britons, and which they are recorded to have been loath to destroy long after the introduction of Christianity. In many parts of England such boulders are still to be seen close beside churches which seem to have been erected on sites of early pagan worship. One of these has been preserved from time immemorial in St. Mary's churchyard at Bungay, and is known as the 'Druid's Stone' and also as the 'Giant's Grave'. Formerly it was customary for girls, after dancing round it twelve times, to whisper their wishes to it. An old lady who was living a few years ago had performed this ceremony. Another similar boulder is to be seen just outside the churchyard wall at Beccles, on the steep slope down to the Waveney marshland. There is yet another near the church at Gorleston. Others are the Dole Stone in the Flegg Hundred, and the Ox-foot Stone at South Lopham. In most instances magical properties are still attributed to these stones, and some of the stories related about them seem to be distorted versions of primitive facts or debilitated survivals of primitive beliefs.

Interest in the Roman occupation of this part of England has lately been greatly stimulated by the remarkable discoveries made at Caistor St. Edmund (*Venta Icenorum*), where, after photographs taken from the air had revealed the position of the streets and several buildings, the foundations of two temples and a large dwelling-house have been uncovered, and also the remains of an annealing oven for the manufacture of glass-ware and a well-preserved pot-kiln. *Venta Icenorum*, which was the chief town of the powerful tribe of which Boudicca (better known as Boadicea) was queen, lies a few miles beyond the recognized limits of Broadland; but some cruisers who make their way up the Yare to Norwich, and who are interested in the history and remains of Roman Britain,

<sup>1</sup> *The Ancient Mark-stones of East Anglia: Their Origin and Folklore.*



will find themselves well repaid for making a short journey of four miles from the old cathedral town in order to see the progress made in the excavations at Caistor St. Edmund.

In Burgh Castle (*Garianonum*), however, Broadland possesses one of the most imposing relics of the Roman occupation of Britain. This great *castellum* stands on comparatively high ground overlooking the junction of the rivers Yare and Waveney. In an earlier chapter some reference is made to this fortress. Its walls, about 14 feet high and 9 feet thick, form three sides of an irregular parallelogram and enclose an area of about five acres of land which has long been under cultivation. On its east side there are four towers of solid masonry, on the top of each of which are holes or depressions which may have served to receive watch-turrets. On the north and south sides large portions of the walls have fallen; but the east wall, which, like the others, is built of flints, with layers of red bricks embedded in mortar, is well preserved in its upper part; the lower part appears to have suffered at the hands of people seeking building material, and it is said that the parish church is largely built of flints derived from the fortress. Mr. A. Hadrian Allcroft, in his *Earthwork of England*, after referring to the fact that the foundations of the Roman work are not as a rule deep, mentions that the huge walls and towers of Burgh Castle 'actually rested in part upon planks of oak laid upon the wet soil. Their strength,' he adds, 'lay rather in the quality of the mortar used or rather of the cement,' and he describes the three remaining walls here as 'one of our finest surviving specimens of this kind of work'.

Romano-British relics discovered at Burgh Castle include spear-heads, a silver spoon, rings, buckles, fibulae, bones of men, horses, oxen, sheep, and pigs, and a large quantity of fragmentary pottery. Suckling, in his *History of Suffolk*, figures a 'Roman eagle found at Burgh Castle in 1822'; but he gives no description of it, nor does he say what became of it.

Roman remains, chiefly in the form of coins and pottery, have been discovered in other parts of the district. The camp that formerly existed at Caister-by-Yarmouth has been quite obliterated, and foundations of what the discoverer believed to have been a Roman pharos at Reedham cannot now be



located. At Covehithe, where there is a little Broad just within the sea-shore sandhills, one or more Roman villas were probably built on land now vanished on account of sea-encroachment, for as the cliffs there have crumbled away Roman midden-pits have been found containing many potsherds. The most interesting discovery here was a strigil, a sickle-shaped scraper used by the Romans in their baths.

Of the Anglian settlers in eastern England, and of the Scandinavians—Danes or Norsemen—who subsequently firmly established themselves here, relics have been brought to light within the bounds of our district; but a study of the local place-names much more clearly reveals how the Northmen encroached upon the lands of the Saxon folk. Even now Danish and Norse personal names are of common occurrence among the inhabitants of the towns and villages of Broadland. Recently, while re-reading those famous sagas the *Heimskringla* and the *Saga of Burnt Njal*, I noted over forty names I was familiar with as those of residents in Norfolk and Suffolk. Traditionally, it was at Hoxne, in the Waveney valley, that Edmund, King of the East Angles, was shot to death with arrows by the Danes; but, as Lord Francis Hervey has shown in his notes to Reyce's *Suffolk Breviary*, there is nothing to identify that place with the 'Haegelisdun' or 'Hailesdun' of the early chroniclers. There is also a tradition that the decisive battle between the Danes and Angles just before Edmund's death was fought on Bloodmoor, which was formerly a tract of heathland covering parts of the parishes of Carlton Colville, Pakefield, and Gisleham near Lowestoft.

Usually it seems to be assumed that the Scandinavians who established themselves in East Anglia, and whose settlement names persist so numerous in the Broads district, were viking raiders who made their way up the great Broadland estuary in their warships, and the situation of many of the parishes with names derived from Norse or Danish personal ones seemingly provides support for this idea; but the early references to Danish invasions of East Anglia distinctly state that the Danes came overland into this part of the country. Thus in the *Saxon Chronicle* we read of the year 870 that 'in this year the [Danish] army rode over Mercia into East

Anglia . . . and in that winter King Eadmund fought against them, and the Danes gained the victory, and slew the king, and subdued all that land ' ; and again we are told that nine years later, in 879, ' the army went from Cirencester to East Anglia, and occupied and divided the land '.

Professor E. Ekwall, in dealing with this matter,<sup>1</sup> says that although ' the obvious inference would seem to be that the Scandinavian colonies were founded in the first instance in the tracts on the lower Waveney and that from there settlers found their way up along the rivers . . . what we know of the Scandinavian colonization tells us this must be a wrong conclusion '. He is of the opinion that Thetford, in West Norfolk, where the Danish army wintered in 870, was the centre from which the invaders distributed themselves, and that they settled about equally thickly over most parts of East Anglia. As, however, there was a considerable English population, the Scandinavians would not be numerically strong enough to affect the place-nomenclature very seriously, ' except in the very low-lying district on the lower Waveney, which was probably not much inhabited before the Scandinavian time '. He admits, however, that the large number of Scandinavian names along the lower banks of the Broadland rivers may be partly due to a later influx of Scandinavian settlers.

Some of the homestead moats wholly or partly surrounding old manor- or farmhouses may be of pre-Norman origin. At Gisleham, near Lowestoft, there is a fine example of the double moat, one surrounding the house and an outer one enclosing the grounds. Near by, at Carlton Colville, a circular moat surrounds an island of hard ground. It goes by the name of ' The Mardle ', and is referred to by Mr. C. G. Chambers in his *A Corner of Suffolk*. In Grenier's *Habitations Gauloises* ' mardelles ', or habitation circles, are described as existing in the Pays Messin, near Metz.

From Domesday Book we learn that a considerable number of *salinae*, or salt-pans, existed in Broadland at the time of the Norman Conquest, mention being made of their presence in the Flegg Hundred and even at South Walsham on the Bure. In all there were something like a hundred of them, and as they were

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the Survey of English Place-Names*, p. 82.

flat pans into which the salt water was admitted at high tide and retained so that salt might be obtained by evaporation their presence where they are recorded to have existed is evidence of the persistence of estuarine conditions down to Norman times. A square enclosure discovered in the Herringby marshes some years ago is believed to have been one of these pans.

Concerning the Broadland churches very much might be said ; but it is impossible to do more than refer briefly to some of the outstanding features of interest of a few of them. The finest Norman architecture in the district is, of course, in Norwich cathedral ; but some of the village churches embody good work of this period. A very fine Norman doorway can be seen at Wroxham, and there are good examples in the churches at Chedgrave, Aldeby, Clippesby, Great Ormesby, and West Somerton. Fritton Church retains an interesting apsidal chancel, while Gillingham Church, near Beccles, has much interesting work in this style. Several of the round towers of which East Anglia possesses so considerable a number are to be seen within the bounds of the district, those at Herringfleet and Haddiscoe being among the finest in the Eastern counties. A notable feature of the tower at Herringfleet are its circular-headed windows enclosing double triangular arches. In the tower at Haddiscoe, too, there are triangular-headed, two-light windows. These and other similar towers are built of rough flints, usually laid in regular courses ; but at Lound and Fritton faced flints are used externally.

Early English work is not uncommon, but nowhere in the district is it so good as in the church at Burgh-next-Aylsham, the chancel of which was described by Sir Gilbert Scott as ' one of peculiar beauty and interest '. The south side, he added, ' consists, on its upper and principal level, of a continuous range of beautiful and similar lancet lights, arched within, and absolutely simple without. Its lower stage consists of a continuous arcade standing upon a stone seat. Both stages are of admirable design and beautiful detail. . . . The architecture of the chancel and of the arch into the former side chapel is of the finest character. . . . It is probably of the same date with the work of St. Hugh at Lincoln, dating about 1200.'

Of Decorated work the district has some good examples.

At Aylsham the main arcade, of which the piers are alternately circular and octagonal, is of this style, and there are good features at Brunstead, Crostwight, Happisburgh, Belaugh, Knapton, Stokesby, and Paston. In Ingham Church we have an interesting example of Late Decorated work, with a very fine tower. Barsham, in the Waveney valley between Beccles and Bungay, has several Decorated windows and has portions of earlier and later periods well worth seeing.

Special interest attaches to the work of the Perpendicular period, because some of the largest and finest churches here are chiefly in this style. Conspicuous among these are the churches at Worstead, Salle, Cawston, Martham, Lowestoft, Bungay, Beccles, North Walsham, and Winterton, while St. Peter Mancroft in Norwich and St. Andrew's Hall, formerly the nave of a Dominican priory church of that city, are famous examples. The towers of the churches at Beccles, Bungay (St. Mary's), and Winterton are fine and lofty; at Beccles and Salle the main arcades are specially noteworthy; and at Cawston there is a magnificent open roof. This roof, one of the best of its date in England, has double hammer-beams, the lower arches of which are borne by wooden shafts rising between the clerestory lights. Curiously carved cherubs with outspread wings adorn the cornice, and full-length angels are supported by the projecting beams. At Salle and Loddon, too, there are good roofs; but neither is as remarkable as that at Knapton, a village about three miles from North Walsham. The splendid double hammer-beam roof here, which is ornamented with no fewer than 160 carved figures of prophets, apostles, saints, and angels, is often said to have been found on board a Spanish ship wrecked on the neighbouring coast; but an entry in the register records its construction here in 1503. At Martham there is some excellent flintwork, and some windows containing interesting Flemish glass. The lofty tower and richly ornamented south porch at Winterton are of this period, and at Worstead, formerly the seat of an important industry named after the place, there is a noble building representing the period of transition from Decorated to Perpendicular.

Several Broadland churches have good carved and painted wood-screens. The best is the famous one at Ranworth; but



those at Barton Turf, Worstead, and Fritton are fine, while Belaugh, Filby, East Ruston, Ludham, Horsey, and Aylsham claim attention. At Trunch, in addition to a good screen, there is a remarkably elaborate font-cover resting on six pillars supporting a canopy beneath which the baptismal rite takes place. It is of Late Perpendicular date.

The Pastons were for several centuries intimately connected with the Broads district, and in Oxnead, North Walsham, and Paston churches imposing monuments to members of this family can be seen ; but they are memorials of later date than the years during which the famous ' Letters ' were written, which were first published nearly a century and a half ago by a Norfolk antiquary, Sir John Fenn. References to these monuments will be found on pages 148 and 161. Other interesting monuments are in Ingham Church (page 156).

If an old tradition is to be credited the first monastic house to be founded in this district was established within the massive walls of the Roman *castellum* at Burgh Castle by King Sigebert for the accommodation of Furseus, or St. Fursey, an Irish monk who, with a few Celtic companions, came into eastern England in the early part of the seventh century to assist in the conversion of Sigebert's pagan subjects to Christianity. Bede, however, states that Furseus took up his abode at a place called ' Cnobersburgh ', and it is by no means certain that the great Roman fortress overlooking the Breydon estuary is the place referred to. However, the church at Burgh Castle has a modern window in stained glass to St. Fursey, and there is a monument, in the Celtic style and also of recent erection, in the churchyard there. For the early history of the Abbey of St. Benet's-at-Holm we are indebted to a local monk, John of Oxnead, and there seems no reason for doubting that it was on the site of a small Saxon hermitage that the fine Benedictine monastery eventually arose. Langley Abbey, of which there are fragmentary but not uninteresting portions remaining, was founded in 1198 by Sir Roger Fitz-Roger Helke, or de Clavering, for Premonstratensian canons, while of St. Olave's Priory, founded in the reign of Henry III by Roger Fitz-Osbert near an old ferry over the Waveney at Herringfleet, the remains are scanty, part of the refectory and a groined crypt being the





CHAPTER HOUSE, LANGLEY ABBEY



most noteworthy. An uninteresting fragment of Ingham Priory, one of the few English establishments of the Mathurines or Trinitarians, may be seen attached to the parish church.

The most interesting ruins of a monastic house in the district are those of Bromholm Priory, in the coast parish of Bacton, which can be most easily reached from North Walsham. This priory was founded in 1113 by William de Glanville for Cluniac monks as a cell to the important priory founded by the first Earl Warrenne at Castle Acre in Norfolk. Nothing of the original building remains. The gatehouse, by which access is gained to the ruins, seems to have been enlarged about the middle of the sixteenth century, when John of Tytleshall was prior, for while its lower part is Transition-Norman, and the piers on each side are Transition-Norman and Early English, above the capital of the arch the stonework is Perpendicular. Harrod, in his *Castles and Convents of Norfolk*, states that the oldest portion of the priory itself is a fragment now standing apart from the rest of the ruins, and which formed the north transept of the church; it probably dates from the latter part of the twelfth century. The most interesting remains are this old portion and those of the dormitory and chapter-house. The last-named are the most picturesque and probably date from the time when the priory became famous on account of its acquisition of what was claimed to be a portion of the Holy Rood, for these remains and those of the dormitory are Early English. The dormitory appears to have been large and lighted by a row of small windows on the east side. The church was cruciform, the nave extending west of the cross aisle about 115 feet, while the cross aisle was about 90 feet from north to south. As proving that the priory was considerably enlarged early in the thirteenth century, Harrod draws attention to a fragment remaining against the east wall of the north transept: 'Not only is it later in style than the wall it abuts upon, but it does not range with the walls of the transept.' This enlargement was probably contemporary with the building of the chapter-house and dormitory. At the west end of the church are some traces of brick vaults, and the presence of a fireplace in a vaulted room beneath the dormitory suggests that this room was the calefactory. Unfortunately, the ruins were for many

years used as outbuildings of the farm on which they stand and neglect is responsible for several portions interesting at the time of Harrod's survey being now almost indistinguishable.

How Bromholm Priory became possessed of its famous wonder-working relic is related by Matthew Paris, from whose account it appears that after Baldwin, Emperor of Constantinople, was defeated and made prisoner at Adrianople, his English chaplain 'left the city of Constantinople privately' carrying with him many valuable relics, including a wooden cross declared to be a portion of the cross on which our Saviour was crucified. This cross he showed to some of the monks at St. Albans; but they were incredulous about its authenticity and, after offering it to several monasteries, he disposed of it to the 'very poor' chapel of Bromholm. From this time (1223) 'divine miracles began to be wrought in that monastery, to the praise and glory of the life-giving Cross; for there the dead were restored to life, the blind recovered their sight, and the lame their power of walking, the skin of lepers was made clean, and those possessed of devils were released from them, and any sick person who approached the aforesaid Cross with faith went away safe and sound. This said Cross is frequently worshipped, not only by the English people, but also by those from distant countries, and those who have heard of the divine miracles connected with it.' John Capgrave, the Lynn monk who wrote a *Lives of the Saints*, asserts that this wonderful relic was the means of thirty-nine persons being raised from the dead. Among the pilgrims to Bromholm was Henry III, who spent some time here with his court, and Harrod thinks it probable that Edward I, who stayed with John, Earl Warrenne, at Gunningham, near by, also paid a visit to the shrine.

By a papal bull obtained in the year 1298 Bromholm Priory freed itself from the control of the Prior of Castle Acre. Among its patrons were the Pastons. Sir John Paston, who died in 1466, was buried in the priory church, when there were great festivities, of which Dawson Turner gives some account in his history of Caister Castle. 'For three continuous days one man was engaged in no other occupation than that of flaying beasts and provision was made of 13 barrels of ale, one barrel of beer of the greatest awyze, and a runlet of red wine of 15

gallons . . . A barber was occupied five days in smartening up the monks for the ceremony ; and the " reke of the torches at the dirge " was so great that the glazier had to remove two panes to permit the fumes to escape.' At the Dissolution the site of the priory was granted to Sir Thomas Wodehouse, who lived in a fine old house of which there are still some interesting remains in the neighbouring parish of Waxham.

Any account of Norwich Castle will hardly be looked for here ; but a little may be added to what appears elsewhere in this book about Bungay Castle, which, like the keep at Norwich, was probably built by Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk. Subsequently the manor of Bungay, with nearly 200 other manors in Norfolk and Suffolk, was inherited by Roger's second son Hugh, his eldest son William having been drowned when the *White Ship* foundered in 1120. Hugh Bigod was a very turbulent baron. He rebelled against King Stephen in 1137. Two years later he declared himself a supporter of Matilda, and in punishment for his disloyalty the king took possession of Bungay Castle. On the accession of Henry II, that king had it partly destroyed. In 1163, however, Earl Bigod set about restoring it, only to have it again destroyed in 1174, when his estates were taken from him. The latter were restored by Richard I to a second Roger Bigod, and in 1204 Edward I granted to another Roger, fifth Earl of Norfolk, leave to fortify the castle of which some massive fragments can still be seen in the midst of the picturesque old town on the Waveney. On the death of this earl the castle passed into the hands of the Uffords, Earls of Suffolk ; and subsequently to the Howards, Dukes of Norfolk. The most striking remains are two low circular towers, and considerable portions of the walls of an octangular ground-plan which enclosed a keep about 54 feet square, three sides of which are still standing, their walls being from 6 to 11 feet thick and from 15 to 17 feet high. In the midst of the mound on which the castle stands a square shaft descends into what is sometimes called a dungeon, but which is probably the bottom of a well from which the holders of the castle obtained water in times of siege.

Caister Castle has already been dealt with in the chapter on Ormesby, Filby, and Rollesby Broads ; but a few facts about



Blickling Hall, additional to those to be found on page 149, may be acceptable. The beautiful Jacobean hall stands on a manor given by William the Conqueror to his chaplain Herfast, the first Norman Bishop of Norwich, and it was afterwards held by Bishop Herbert de Lozinga, the builder of Norwich Cathedral. It subsequently came into the possession of the Dagworths, one of whom, Sir Nicholas, built a manor-house here which was standing until the early part of the seventeenth century, when Sir Henry Hobart, a Lord Chief Justice of the reign of James I, erected the existing Hall. From the Dagworths the manor passed to the Erpinghams—one of whom was the builder of the fine cathedral gateway at Norwich—and afterwards to Sir John Fastolff, the builder of Caister Castle. Fastolff sold it to Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, ex-Lord Mayor of London and great-grandfather of Queen Anne Boleyn.

Norfolk people, crediting the statements of Spelman, Blomefield, and other historians, have claimed that Anne Boleyn was born at Blickling; but a like claim is made on behalf of Hever Castle in Kent and Rochfort Hall in Essex. That she spent some years of her childhood at Blickling is probable; and there is a tradition mentioned by Agnes Strickland in her *Lives of the Queens of England* that after she was beheaded her body was secretly conveyed from the Tower of London and buried in the church at Salle, where the Boleyns were established before they bought Blickling. There are preserved at Blickling Hall two large wooden statues, one of Anne Boleyn and the other of Queen Elizabeth; also some draperies, gowns, and nightcaps worn by the ill-fated Anne. Some of the rooms have finely ornamented chimneypieces, one of which came from the Norwich house of Sir Thomas Browne, the author of *Religio Medici*, while another originally formed a window arch in Caister Castle. The front of the Hall, bearing the date 1626, has a richly decorated entrance, above which are the arms of its builder, Sir Henry Hobart. Some statues in the gardens came from the terrace of the Pastons' old Hall at Oxnead, and in the park is a pyramidal mausoleum in which are buried an Earl of Buckinghamshire and his two wives.

A few other old houses may interest cruisers who are willing to take occasional rambles into some of the marsh-bordering



GREEN'S COTTAGE BELOW ACLE BRIDGE



parishes. At Barsham an old farmhouse formed part of a larger manor-house which was a home of the Sucklings for several generations. It was to this family that Sir John Suckling, the cavalier poet, belonged. The rectory house of this parish is a delightful old house with Dutch gables and having arms of the Sucklings and the Earls of Norfolk in its stained-glass windows. In this house Catherine Suckling, who became the mother of Lord Nelson, was born. Yet a third house connected with the Sucklings is Roos Hall, a small but well-preserved Tudor house which road-travellers who visit Barsham from Beccles will see standing a little way back from the road on the right soon after they leave the town. A little higher up the Waveney a pleasant ramble from the river at Ellingham or Ditchingham can be taken to Broome Rectory, which apparently dates from the early part of the seventeenth century and in which, in 1772, Thomas Manning, the friend of Charles Lamb and the first Englishman to enter the forbidden Tibetan city of Lhasa, was born. At Little Hautbois, on the Bure, the old Hall is a good example of the Elizabethan style. Some of the older farmhouses along the borders of the valleys have a picturesque charm and harmonize with their surroundings.

A fair number of thatched cottages can still be seen in almost every part of the district ; but few, if any, of the old wattle-and-daub type remain standing. Thirty years ago there were a good many of them around the Broads. They were constructed of a rough wooden framework filled in with what were called ' rizzes ', usually consisting of hazel wands held in position by interlacings of tar-cord. Over these the ' daub ', or clay, was spread and clung to the ' rizzes ' in the way of plaster-work to reeds or laths. Usually the fireplace and chimney were the only brick portions of such cottages, and these often remained standing after the rest of a cottage had fallen down. The more substantial ' clay lump ' cottages were still being built here and there at the beginning of the present century. The old process of making the ' lump ' was to have the clay trodden out by a horse, mixed with couch grass, and shaped into large blocks that were allowed to dry before being built into the wooden framework of the cottage. Clay lump is very enduring—I have heard it said that the older it is the harder it is found to

be. Some of the cottages built of it will probably long outlast many of the new ones and bungalows recently erected. A familiar feature of the back yards and gardens of cottages in the neighbourhoods of Yarmouth and Lowestoft is the tall, narrow, usually tile-roofed shed in which the fishermen-occupiers of the cottages smoke herrings, generally for home consumption.

The harvesting of reeds is a very ancient industry in the Broad district and still provides occupation for some men during the early months of the year, for the reeds are used for various purposes, including the roofing of boat-houses and occasionally cottages and park lodges, while gardeners find them useful for forming screens to protect tender shrubs and other plants from cold winds. Rushes were formerly used in the making of such things as mats, hassocks, and workmen's dinner-baskets, also a light kind of horse-collar lined with felt or some similar material where it came in contact with the animal's hide. In some parts of the district a rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) is still called 'collar gladden'. In the rushlight days large quantities of 'candle rushes' were cut, and in Norwich an annual Rush Fair was held, to which Broadsmen took cart- or wagon-loads of rushes for sale. I have chatted with an old lady at Stalham who could remember rushlights being used in her Broadland home and what a great improvement it was thought to be when tallow candles—'farthing dips'—became obtainable. Rush candles, however, were being sold as recently as fifty years ago. Peat- or hover-cutting also found occasional employment for some dwellers in the marshlands; it was to some extent controlled by local custom or common-land trustees, who fixed the maximum number of hovers to be cut by a household. According to the Rev. M. C. H. Bird, in the parish of East Ruston, in the Ant valley, 5,000 hovers was the maximum. When stacked and dried they sold at one shilling a hundred, and fifty shillings worth was enough to last a cottager for the whole year. Near Aylsham there were formerly several men who added something to a scanty income by the making of heather brooms; but 'broom-tying', as it was called, was a heathland rather than a marshland employment, though a broom-tier with his donkey-cart loaded with brooms used to be no uncommon sight in one of the little Broadland towns on market day.



## CHAPTER XX

### YACHT-RACING

BY A. TOWNLEY CLARKSON (*Secretary of the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club 1894 to 1918*)

AND ROLAND L. T. CLARKSON

PLEASURE-BOAT sailing and racing were reckoned among the sports of what is now known as the Broads district at an early period ; but it is difficult to determine exactly when days were first set apart for properly organized racing. We know, however, that water frolics were held in the middle of the eighteenth century, and that pleasure boats owned by various gentlemen residing in the district competed in the races ; but the terms ' regatta ' and ' yacht ' do not seem to have been commonly used until about 1850. The water frolics were held at Thorpe near Norwich and Burgh at the top of Breydon Water ; at any rate, these appear to have been the most important places in the earlier years of the nineteenth century. Similar frolics were held elsewhere, but they were not annual events like the two mentioned. Thorpe Water Frolic was quite a social function, and about 1830-40 several thousands of people yearly flocked to the meadow just below the present railway bridge, which, on some occasions at all events, was kept as an enclosure, a charge of half a crown being made for admission. Burgh Water Frolic was also regarded as an important event, and was attended by the Mayor of Great Yarmouth in state. It seems to have had its origin in the annual visit paid to St. Olave's Bridge and Hardley Cross by the Yarmouth bailiffs, some account of whose proceedings, and their attendant joviality, is given in another chapter.<sup>1</sup>

For many years the occasion of this frolic was looked upon as a gala day by the inhabitants of Yarmouth ; but the passing

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 18-20.

of the Municipal Corporations Act 1835 prevented the application of the borough funds to the maintenance of the pageant, the official expenses of which had increased from a modest thirty shillings allowed to the bailiffs in the sixteenth century to about £100 a year ; and the Mayor ceased to attend in his official capacity. The frolic, however, continued to be a great carnival for many years afterwards, but it gradually became less popular, and was finally discontinued about 1883, though about 1912 or 1913 an attempt was made to revive it.

The yachts which took part in the races of the first half of the nineteenth century were lateen-rigged as to the foremast, which was stepped almost up in the yacht's eyes ; while on the mainmast, which was placed exactly amidships, was carried a large boom and gaff mainsail.

The lateen rig came to England from the Mediterranean, where Mr. Keble Chatterton considers it was established about 350 B.C., and in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries English ships had a lateen sail on the mizen-mast. There is evidence that this rig was used on the Broads well over a hundred years ago, and Folkard, in his *Sailing Boats*, published about 1850, refers to it as well established. In the later boats a lug mizen was substituted for the lateen mainsail.

One of the most famous of the lateen-rigged yachts was the *Maria*. She was built in 1834 by Brown of Yarmouth for Mr. Plowman of Normanstone, Lowestoft, and at first called the *Paragon*. Sir Jacob Preston bought her in 1837, changed her name to the *Maria*, and took her to Barton Broad, which has been her home ever since. For many years she was one of the crack yachts on the Broads till she retired from racing, but she was at Wroxham in 1894 and raced at Barton in 1897. Her old age has been spent in a boat-house at Barton, and an article in the *Eastern Daily Press* described how in 1928 she was discovered still in existence, but fallen over on her side, and apparently damaged.

The *Maria* was 23 feet long, with 8 feet beam and 3 feet draught of water ; and it is interesting to note the dimensions of two other lateeners, both of which were famous craft in their day—the *Enchantress*, belonging to Mr. H. P. Green, and the *Miranda*, of Mr. Blake Humphrey. They were 19 feet between



*Frank Southgate*

THE LATEENER 'MARIA', BUILT IN 1834



perpendiculars, with 6 feet counter, about 10 feet beam, and 4 feet draught of water, and the foreyard of their largest racing sloop is said to have been some 70 feet long. The *Vampire*, a nine-tonner, owned by Mr. W. S. Everitt, had a foreyard about 63 feet long, and the *Maria's* was probably about the same length.

Another of the old lateeners—the *Ariel*, built by Brighton at Bungay in 1861 for Mr. W. Mann, and afterwards owned by Mr. Clifford Smith—was still in commission at Beccles up to the time of the Great War, though no longer lateen-rigged.

In calculating the measurement for time-allowance in racing the only factor formerly was length, taken from the fore-side of the stem to the afterside of the stern-post. The boats were built with very short counters, and it was not until about 1850<sup>1</sup> that the builders recognized the advantage of making them longer, which ultimately they did to the extent of one-third or even more of the length between perpendiculars, when it became necessary to penalize them. This was done by adding half the length of the counter to the length from stern to stern-post. This measurement remained in force until after the founding of the Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club, when the Thames Rule of computing tonnage was adopted, half the length of the counter, however, still being taken in for length.

<sup>1</sup> The following advertisement appeared in the *Lynn Advertiser*, dated 10th August 1850:

'NORWICH REGATTA, Monday, 19th August 1850.

'A Silver Tankard of not less value than Fifteen Guineas will be given for Cutter Rigged Pleasure Boats not exceeding 28 feet on the ram. Time to be allowed for length, quarter minute per foot.

'A Cup of not less value than Eight Guineas for Boats rigged with Foresail and Mizzen not exceeding 16 feet on the ram. Time to be allowed for length, quarter minute per foot.

'A Prize will be given for an Amateur Sculling Match. A Handsome set of Shirt Studs, value Six Guineas.

'A Prize for Four-oared Boats, to be rowed by Non-commissioned Officers and Privates of the 11th Hussars. The First Boat to receive £4, the Second £2.

'A Prize for Watermen's Four Oars not exceeding 24 feet in length. First Prize £4, Second do. £2.

'A Prize for Watermen's Sculling. First Prize £3, Second do. £1.

'A Prize for Watermen's Punts. First Prize £3, Second do. £1.

'All boats intending to sail must be entered at Cattermole's Gardens, Thorpe, or by letter to the Secretary. No entry will be received after 10 o'clock a.m. of the day of the race.'



About 1847, cutters—that is to say, yachts carrying a boom and gaff mainsail and one large jib, but no stay foresail—made their appearance. The *Wallace*, 19 feet, owned by Mr. Randell Burroughes of Thorpe ; the *Tantivy*, 19 feet, owned by Messrs. J. B. and H. Morgan of Norwich ; and the *Venus*, 19 feet, owned by Mr. Francis of Beccles, were the first racing yachts of this class. At this time the 16th Lancers were quartered at Norwich, and several officers of that regiment took an active interest in sailing, Captain Coster becoming owner of the *Kestrel*, and Captains Heaviside and Shelley and Mr. Lockhart Scott owners of other yachts. Mr. Alec Bence of Thorington also had a boat, and a club was formed called the Amateur Cutter Yacht Club. This was the beginning of united action ; but the life of the club was brief, owing to the funds being exhausted by a grand *déjeuner* at Wroxham.

In 1859, Colonel George Wilson of Beccles and Mr. Green of Wroxham started the idea of forming a club, and a meeting was held at Norwich, at which Mr. Henry Morgan acted as Secretary *pro tem*. The result was the formation of the Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club, Colonel Wilson being elected Commodore and Mr. C. W. Millard Secretary at a meeting held on April 16th 1859 at Mr. Millard's office in Norwich. The Committee consisted of Messrs. W. H. Scott, Fred Green, and A. J. N. Chamberlin, representing the river Bure ; Messrs. H. P. Green, W. Jecks, and J. B. Morgan for the Yare ; and Messrs. E. Swatman, W. S. Everitt, and Henry Farr for the Waveney. To these were added the Commodore, the Vice-Commodore (Mr. E. S. Trafford), the Rear-Commodore (Mr. F. Brown), the Treasurer (Mr. H. Morgan), and the Secretary. At a subsequent meeting, Messrs. Samuel Nightingale, T. M. Read, and W. M. Bond were added to represent Great Yarmouth.

The first season's programme was for races to take place at Cantley on June 16th, at Wroxham on July 14th, and at Oulton on August 11th. Two races were sailed on each of these days, the first for cutters, the second for lateen-rigged yachts (foresail and mizen). The prize in each race was £15 at the two first-named places ; but at Oulton and in subsequent races the amount was divided into two prizes, the first £10 and

the second £5. The cutters which started in the first race at Cantley were :

<i>Tantivy</i>	.	.	.	Morgan	.	.	.	6 tons.
<i>Oberon</i>	.	.	.	Morton	.	.	.	5 "
<i>Union</i>	.	.	.	Chamberlin	.	.	.	3 "
<i>Kestrel</i>	.	.	.	Butcher	.	.	.	12 "
<i>Belvidere</i>	.	.	.	Read	.	.	.	9 "
<i>Clara</i>	.	.	.	Smith	.	.	.	3 "

For the lateen yachts race the starters were *Osprey*, Swatman ; *Maud*, Asker ; *Atalanta*, Wilson ; and *Amateur*, Brown. Unfortunately the records do not mention their tonnage.

The lateen-rigged yachts were gradually superseded by cutters, and by 1863 only two appear in the list of entries at Oulton on August 6th, namely, the *Vampire*, owned by Mr. W. S. Everitt, and the *Enchantress*, owned by Mr. H. P. Green. The entries on that occasion were as follows :

For the first race—

<i>Belvidere</i> (cutter)	.	10 tons	.	W. H. Clabburn.
<i>Wanderer</i>	"	14 "	.	R. J. H. Harvey.
<i>Myth</i>	"	9 "	.	{ R. J. H. Harvey.
<i>Red Rover</i>	"	14 "	.	{ J. L. Barber in charge.
<i>Alabama</i>	"	14 "	.	S. Nightingale.
			.	E. S. Trafford.

In the second race :

<i>Vampire</i> (lateen)	" "	9 tons	.	W. S. Everitt.
<i>Belvidere</i> (cutter)	.	10 "	.	W. H. Clabburn.
<i>Bittern</i>	"	7 "	.	Morgan and Hansell.
<i>Myth</i>	"	9 "	.	R. J. H. Harvey.
<i>Enchantress</i> (lateen)	.	8 "	.	H. P. Green.
<i>Blanche</i> (cutter)	.	7 "	.	R. Morris.
<i>Woman in White</i> (cutter)	.	6 "	.	J. L. Barber.

In the 'seventies and 'eighties it was no uncommon thing to find a dozen yachts, on board of which their owners could and did live in comfort,<sup>1</sup> entered for a race ; and in 1874 a race

<sup>1</sup> The *Firefly*, a well-known 10-tonner built for Messrs. J. and H. Morgan in 1874, was typical of that class in the 'seventies. With a low freeboard, hardly any sheer, long and flat in the floor, the body of the boat not drawing more than 2 feet, her hold of the water being obtained by a deep keel, almost if not quite straight, which made the total draught of water about 4 feet 6 inches. Length over all 32 feet, some 10 feet of which was counter partly submerged, and beam 10 feet. The length of the bowsprit out-board being about the same as the length from stem to stern-post, namely, 22 feet, gives

from Yarmouth to Reedham and back brought out the following starters :

<i>Red Rover</i>	.	.	15 tons	.	.	S. Nightingale.
<i>Firefly</i>	.	.	10 "	.	.	J. B. and H. Morgan.
<i>Lethe</i>	.	.	10 "	.	.	G. Gawdy.
<i>Alarm</i>	.	.	10 "	.	.	B. V. Winch.
<i>Kismet</i>	.	.	11 "	.	.	F. Taylor.
<i>Glance</i>	.	.	11 "	.	.	P. E. Hansell.
<i>Helen</i>	.	.	24 "	.	.	R. W. Burleigh.
<i>Gem</i>	.	.	6 "	.	.	J. and F. Mack.
<i>Vindex</i>	.	.	9 "	.	.	Sir S. B. Crossley.
<i>Belvidere</i>	.	.	9 "	.	.	J. Barnby & H. Teasdel.
<i>Gleam</i>	.	.	6 "	.	.	C. A. Preston.
<i>Vivid</i>	.	.	6 "	.	.	G. F. Crane.
<i>Spray</i>	.	.	7 "	.	.	F. G. Foster.
<i>Little Mary</i>	.	.	8 "	.	.	B. P. Phillips.

With the alteration in rig from lateen to cutter, or, more strictly speaking, to sloop, came a change in the form of the hulls of yachts. The enormous foresail right up forward in the lateener had necessitated very full bows. These became finer in the sloops, giving an easier entrance, while the lengthened counters gave a vastly improved delivery of the water aft, resulting in a boat admirably adapted to their own particular waters, viz. a shallow-bodied vessel of light displacement, which, with a beam great in proportion to its length and a deep keel, was rendered capable of standing up to its relatively enormous spread of canvas.

an idea of the enormous jib carried ; but unfortunately the dimensions of the yacht's other spars are not obtainable.

The following particulars of the cutter *Arrow*, built for Mr. B. V. Winch by Kemp Bros. in 1877, may be taken as fairly typical. Length over all, 38 feet 6 inches ; length on deck, stem to stern-post, 20 feet 6 inches ; length on water line, 34 feet ; beam, 10 feet ; draught of water, 6 feet ; bowsprit out-board, 26 feet 2 inches ; boom, 31 feet 6 inches ; area of mainsail, 822 square feet ; area of jib, 520 square feet ; total amount of ballast, 7 tons.

The *Irixie*, built by W. Brighton in 1883, was a most successful boat in the smaller class, and made a fine record under the ownership of Mr. E. Tillyard. Her length over all was 27 feet 6 inches ; length on deck, stem to stern-post, 20 feet 6 inches ; length on water line, 24 feet ; beam, 6 feet 6 inches ; draught, 3 feet 9 inches ; bowsprit out-board, 22 feet ; boom, 25 feet ; ballast, 4 tons.

The *Wanderer*, built for Mr. J. Lee Barber by W. Brighton in 1886, was a very fast boat, and gained many prizes. Her draught of water was less than the *Arrow*, and her displacement was somewhat lighter, her beam being under 9 feet.

The full bow, however, remained a characteristic of Broadland yachts for many years, and in order to reduce their tendency to carry a hard-weather helm when on a wind, a tremendous jib was carried on a very long bowsprit ; so that though the mast was always stepped much farther forward than in seagoing yachts, the fore and aft triangles were often approximately equal. A typical ten-tonner of the 'seventies had a length over-all of 34 feet, beam 10 feet, and draught about 5 feet, the mainsail luff being 23 feet and foot 35 feet, while the jib also had a leech of 23 feet and a foot of 36 feet.

As larger yachts were built this sail-plan became unwieldy, and a class of wherry-rigged yachts came into being. One of the first of these was the old *Helen*, owned by Mr. W. Jecks, and afterwards by Mr. R. W. Burleigh of Halesworth, and in after years known as the *Vera*. Other famous yachts of this class were the *Kiama*, 40 tons, built in 1876 for Mr. W. Cooper Brown ; the *Ormonde*, owned by Mr. Albert Darby ; Sir Roger Palmer's *Keenaghmore*, 26 tons ; and the *Waveney*, built by Brighton for Mr. J. T. Poyser, of 55 tons. These vessels were rigged like the Norfolk wherries, with the mast well forward and one large mainsail only, having a gaff but no boom, generally hoisted by a single halyard by means of a small winch on the fore-side of the mast. This arrangement gave ample room for spacious cabin accommodation below decks, but they were of course cruising, and not racing, yachts.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that a considerable number of Norfolk trading wherries have been in past years converted into pleasure craft, and made extremely comfortable vessels, a large saloon and two or three sleeping cabins taking the place of the hold. A few were specially built.

Contemporary with the wherry-rigged yachts were a number of large sloop-rigged vessels known as barges, whose sail-plan had been modified so as to allow of a more moderate bowsprit, of which the *Spider*, built for Mr. Laurence T. Clarkson in 1889, 24 tons ; the *Florinda*, 23 tons, built by Collins in 1890 for Mr. Downes ; the *White Seal*, owned by Mr. F. Corbett and Mr. E. M. Corbett, and familiar for thirty years as the flagship of the Broads One Design Class ; and *Cotillion*, 16 tons, owned

by Dr. W. E. Dixon, may be mentioned as examples, while there were also yachts like the *Kingfisher* and *Isabel* with finer lines under water, which may be regarded as the forerunners of the later racing cruisers.

After 1890, however, there was a falling off in the number of larger yachts built, and as far as racing was concerned rapid modifications brought into being an entirely different type of cruiser. The comparatively full-bodied craft of the 'seventies and 'eighties gave place to flat-floored boats with fin keels and, latterly, balanced rudders. As these retained the long bowsprit and tremendous sail area they proved very fast and extremely handy, being able to spin round almost on their heels and to tack in the narrow rivers with the utmost ease.

In order to facilitate racing the accommodation shrank to a single two-berth cabin amidships, with a large cockpit and a considerable expanse of deck forward of the mast and over the counter. The handicap for cruisers Classes A and B at the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club's Regatta on Oulton Broad in August 1905 brought out the following boats, all of which were of this type :

<i>Bonito</i>	.	.	.	.	.	H. E. Mackley.
<i>Bugler</i>	.	.	.	.	.	W. H. Moore.
<i>Alexandra</i>	.	.	.	.	.	H. W. Newman.
<i>Nathalie</i> <sup>1</sup>	.	.	.	.	.	E. G. Morley.
<i>Queen Mab</i> <sup>2</sup>	.	.	.	.	.	F. Atkinson.
<i>Layde</i>	.	.	.	.	.	Messrs. Hawkins and Corbett.
<i>Muriel</i>	.	.	.	.	.	W. A. H. Buller.
<i>Sparklet</i> <sup>3</sup>	.	.	.	.	.	H. F. Bassett.
<i>Barbara</i>	.	.	.	.	.	H. Thomas.

During the first fifteen years of the twentieth century this class of cruiser produced some of the finest racing which has been seen on the Broads. In their prime there would be often eight or ten starters at the August Regattas on Oulton Broad, presenting a magnificent sight as they swept up the Broad.

<sup>1</sup> The *Nathalie's* name was afterwards changed to *Madge* and later on to *Madie*, and twenty-five years later she was still winning her share of prizes under the ownership of Major W. J. Mallinson.

<sup>2</sup> *Queen Mab* was built by Ernest Collins in 1900 for Harry Youngs.

<sup>3</sup> *Sparklet* was afterwards owned by Messrs. Edwards and Beadle. Other well-known cruisers in this class were *Sayonara*, owned by E. P. Buckworth and *San Toi*, at one time owned by J. Caddy, and for many years after by G. F. Marshall.





'A' CLASS CRUISERS RACING ON OULTON BROAD



NORFOLK PUNTS AT HORNING



with their clouds of canvas set, or raced past Everitt's Green with half their decks awash and the crew hanging on like flies.

By those days the number of races had grown to four, generally, viz. Raters, Cruisers, 14-foot Dinghies, and the newly-formed class of Broads One Designs. Very soon, however, other One Design classes were built, and races for the Yare and Bure, and Great Yarmouth, One Designs were added.

The cost of building and maintenance after the Great War put a great handicap on the larger cruisers and encouraged the development of small craft, with the result that present-day regattas often provide six and seven races catering for open and half-decked boats, and two and perhaps three classes of One Designs, in addition to the Dinghies, Raters, and Cruisers.

Before passing, however, to the actual description of a yacht race on the Broads some mention must be made of the numerous yacht clubs to be found in Broadland.

The premier of them is the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk, which has its head-quarters at Lowestoft. This club, as briefly noted (page 312), was founded in 1859 as the Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club, and has continuously promoted yacht-racing and yacht-building ever since, whilst its regattas have grown from three days in 1859 at Cantley, Wroxham, and Oulton to, in 1930, eight days on inland waters (at Wroxham, Beccles, and Oulton), with a total of some forty-five races, and eight days also at sea off Lowestoft with a further forty races.

This is the only club in the district to cater for seagoing craft as well as river craft, and in 1898 was honoured by being promoted to royal rank, when under the commodoreship of Mr. T. M. Read. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was patron of the club, and on his accession to the throne as King Edward VII graciously continued his patronage, which King George V has also been pleased to do.

For many years the club's head-quarters were at Norwich, but about 1886 a one-storied building facing the Yacht Basin at Lowestoft was erected, and served till 1903, when the present commodious club-house was built; it was opened by Lord Claud Hamilton. The old club-house became the pavilion of

the Lowestoft Town Football Club on the Crown Meadow. Still more recently—in the spring of 1928—a ladies' wing was added, and the following year a lease was granted to the club of the newly-erected pavilion in the Nicholas Everitt Park facing Oulton Broad, and provided through the generosity of Mr. H. Hollingsworth. The use of this pavilion, however, is shared by all the clubs holding regattas on the Broad, and the races now start and finish from an imaginary line in front of it, instead of from the old line abreast of the maltings and nearer the locks.

In 1876 the Yare Sailing Club was formed, the first Commodore being Mr. B. V. Winch, owner of the *Alarm*, who held office for three years. The objects were to encourage the building, improvement, and sailing of small yachts and boats, and the club's head-quarters were, as now, at Norwich.

In its earlier years the regattas were mostly held on the Yare at Cantley and on Oulton Broad, but in course of time its activities extended to the Bure, and in 1907 the name was altered to the present form of the 'Yare and Bure Sailing Club'. The regattas on the Yare have been dropped since 1921, and now they all take place either on the Bure or on Oulton Broad.

This club started in 1908 a Yare and Bure One Design Class, of half-decked boats, 20 feet long, 6 feet beam, with a draught of 2 feet 9 inches, and 275 square feet sail area. They are rigged with a gunter-lug and jib, and were designed and built by Ernest Woods of Cantley. About forty boats have been built, making it one of the largest One Design Classes in the country, and some very keen racing has been provided.

The year 1883 saw the establishment of the Great Yarmouth Yacht Club, with a view to encouraging racing on Breydon Water. Sir E. Birkbeck, Bart., owner of the cutter *Florence*, was Commodore for the first two years.

These regattas on Breydon were successors to the old-time water frolics, and the race for the club challenge bowl was sailed on Breydon, with only occasional departures elsewhere, till 1909, except during 1904–7, when the club was in abeyance. This bowl was provided by subscription in 1888, and the first race for it was won by Mr. Arthur Watling with the *Ada*. The

course was on the lower part of Breydon, the bottom buoy being opposite the brewery stores at the mouth of the river Bure, and with a southerly wind and flood tide it was said to be the most difficult buoy in the world to negotiate, especially if it had to be left on the port hand. This can easily be believed by those who know the spot where the Bure and Breydon join and the adventures associated with getting round 'The Knowl'. The top buoy was generally placed well up Breydon, about one stake the Yarmouth side of the 'cross' or 'half-way' stake. After the building of the railway bridge in 1903 the bottom buoy had to be placed above it, and was generally put about half a mile up Breydon, round the 'half-mile point'. There were nearly always at least two regattas every year; latterly three or four; and two or three races each day, in which such yachts as the *Greyhound*, *Falcon*, *Ada*, *Astaneet*, *Playmate*, and *Io* competed, as well as Raters and a class known as '18-footers'.

The building of the railway bridge across the lower end of Breydon in 1903 spoilt the existing course, and after that interest flagged, as a long walk up the 'wall' was necessary to see the racing. The silting up of the Breydon flats and the growth of yachting centres at various points higher up the rivers caused their final abandonment, and since 1910 the Yarmouth club's regattas have been held, like those of other clubs,<sup>1</sup> chiefly at Cantley on the Yare, at Wroxham and Acle on the Bure, Potter Heigham on the Thurne, and on Oulton Broad. The building of a large beet-sugar factory at Cantley caused the regattas there to be dropped after 1921, and Horning and Wroxham, both on the Bure, have taken the place.<sup>2</sup>

The Great Yarmouth Yacht Club also in 1913 formed a new Design Class of 19 feet half-decked boats, 6 feet 2 inches beam, 1 foot 7 inches draught, and 307 square feet sail area, distinguished from the Yare and Bure's by having a balanced-lug sail, a centre-plate, and being able to work the jib as a spinnaker.

<sup>1</sup> Races for motor boats were held on Breydon by the British Motor Boat Club in 1912 and 1913.

<sup>2</sup> Coldham Hall is another spot on the Yare where formerly regattas were held, but have been dropped, and there are one or two other places which one time had an annual river frolic.



In 1895 the Waveney Sailing Club was started, with headquarters at Oulton Broad, mainly to encourage racing on the Broad, a large proportion of the matches being for open and half-decked boats of one sort and another, although the cruisers have by no means been neglected. As with the two previous clubs, the Waveney Sailing Club formed a Open Design Class in 1923. These are rigged with a gunter-lug and jib, and have no centre-plate. They are 20 feet long, 6 feet 6 inches beam, 2 feet 11 inches draught, with a sail area of 280 square feet, and about 3 cwt. on the keel.

The first Commodore of the Waveney Sailing Club was Mr. J. W. Stewart, owner of the *Ada*, and one feature of interest about this club is the long tenure of office of Mr. W. F. Cockcroft as Commodore, who, having served in 1906 and 1907, took office again in 1910 and continued for nine seasons throughout the war period till the end of 1919.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw other additions to the number of clubs in the Broad district. In 1906 a very sporting little one was formed, the Beccles Amateur Sailing Club, to promote Saturday afternoon matches amongst the local boats. These boats were started in handicap order instead of the usual practice of allowing time at the end of the race, with the result that the first boat past the post was the winner, and more interest was created for the spectators. The first Commodore was Dr. H. P. Helsham, Mr. F. E. Banham being hon. treasurer, and Mr. A. R. Scott hon. secretary.

Many years ago an earlier sailing club existed at Beccles, the club building being just above Wright's Boat Yard, but few records of it remain.

In 1909 the Horning Town Sailing Club was founded by Mr. Edward Gillard, who started it with six members, and he gradually worked it up to its present strength. It now holds some half-dozen regattas during the season at Horning and elsewhere on the Bure. Horning is one of the localities on the Broad which has developed a great deal in recent years, both from the yachting and residential point of view, but the picturesque old village yet remains to bring pleasure to the visitor, and should he stay chatting with some of the 'old timers' maybe he will hear tales of the Horning 'Swallow'.

regattas of the past, when lively times were nearly always seen. The motto of the competitors seemed to be 'win, tie, or wrangle', and as often as not the day ended with free fights on the quay.

After the Great War yet another club for the encouragement of local sport on Oulton Broad was formed, in 1919, as the Oulton Broad Sailing and Rowing Club, but it is now known as the 'Lowestoft and Oulton Broad Yacht Club', and holds some nine or ten regattas during the year.

The youngest club is the Norfolk Punt Club, established at the instigation of Mr. Arthur Batchelor after a lively newspaper correspondence in the *Eastern Daily Press* on Norfolk gun-punts. The objects are to preserve, and if possible improve, the traditional type of punts, and to encourage competition in quanting, rowing, and sailing them.

The first meeting was held at Norwich in December 1926, when Mr. H. A. Morris was elected Commodore, and rules and definitions were framed. These were based largely on the Hickling type of punt, and define a Norfolk punt as 'a strongly-built, light-draught, partly-decked wooden craft, with a pointed stem and stern, very low freeboard, and nearly flat bottom, suited to the purpose of being quanted, rowed, or sailed to fowl'. The length to be not less than 16 feet or more than 22 feet, while the beam may vary between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{11}$  of the length, and the draught must not exceed 6 inches (excluding centre-plate). The sail-area is not to exceed 8 square feet per foot of length.

Races for Norfolk punts are now included in the regatta programmes of most of the other clubs, and at Wroxham, Barton, and Hickling open regattas. Handicapping is based on twelve seconds per foot length over-all per mile, and a novel system has been introduced whereby every time a punt wins she has a foot added to her length. There are now about twenty-five boats in the class. On page 96 of Part I of this book will be found an excellent description of how these punts were used for wild-fowl shooting, and illustrations of them at work will be found facing pages 96, 102 and 212 of Part I. For racing, of course, a mast and sail is used, which does not appear in these pictures.

In surveying briefly the yacht clubs to be found in the

Broads district mention must also be made of the Broads One Design Club, which, though it differs from the others in that the membership is restricted to the owners of the Broads One Design Class, and that it has no club-house, has been the means of producing a fleet of One Design boats unequalled for beauty and handiness, equally good at sea as on the river, and possessing a reputation which extends far beyond the limits of the Norfolk Broads.

They are half-decked boats, designed by Linton Hope, and built of mahogany at Burnham-on-Crouch. They are sloop-rigged, 24 feet in length over-all, 16 feet on the water-line, 5 feet 1 inch beam, and with a fixed fin keel draw 3 feet of water. The sail area is 252 square feet, and the crew generally either two or three persons, though they can be perfectly well managed single-handed.

The class was started in 1900 with five boats: *Dunlin*, F. Corbett; *Teal*, E. M. Corbett; *Flittermouse*, M. Garnett; *Curlew*, H. W. Newman; and *Peewit*, Lieut. F. S. Rogers. These were soon added to: *Dabchick*, R. J. Colman in 1903; *Kingfisher*, R. H. Dobson in 1904; with *Dotterel*, Capt. Hon. St. Clair, and *Tern*, T. Serjeant and Dennison, in 1905, being the earlier new-comers. By 1930 the class had gradually grown to twenty-seven boats, all the original ones being still in commission and taking their share of prizes.

The total number of regattas appearing on the list issued by the Norfolk and Suffolk Regatta Association for 1930 was sixty-six, as compared with forty-two in 1920 and twenty-nine in 1901. This includes the racing at sea off Lowestoft, but not the Saturday afternoon matches arranged by the Beccles Sailing Club, and nearly half of them were held on Oulton Broad. Of the remainder, Wroxham, Horning, Beccles, and Lowestoft have the largest share, the other fixtures being at Potter Heigham, Acle, Thurne Mouth, Hickling, and Barton.

As a rule, the yachts racing on the Broads race in one of the following ten classes:

Cruisers, Class A (large),  
Cruisers, Class B (small),  
Broads One Design Class,



BROADS ONE DESIGN CLASS RACING AT BECCLES



14-FT. DINGHY CLASS AT BECCLES REGATTA





Yare and Bure One Design Class,  
Great Yarmouth One Design Class,  
Waveney One Design Class,  
200-foot Sail Area Restricted Class (formerly known as  
Raters),  
14-foot Dinghies,  
Open and Half-decked Boats (also referred to as the 30 foot  
class),  
Punts,

while at Lowestoft there are, in addition, the usual seagoing classes for larger yachts.

In outlining the history of Broadland yachting some mention has been made of the first six of the above classes. But a brief reference must also be made to two others—the 200-foot Sail Area Class, and the 14-foot Dinghies.

The first of these are well known on the upper reaches of the Thames, on the Trent, and elsewhere, and are boats built for speed pure and simple. They are flat on the floor, have very low free-board, and are half-decked, with a comparatively small well and a large centre-plate. They are generally Bermuda-rigged or with a gunter-lug. The present rules limit the size to which they may be built, but in the old days they raced simply on time allowance, according to their rating, and yachts from half-raters up to 5'0 rating were permissible. One of the biggest on these waters was the *Caprice* of 3'3 rating, who had four joint-owners, and carried a crew of five, other well-remembered names being *Talisman* (1'5), R. Lee Barber; *Willa* (1'2); and *Atalanta*, besides many another.

The dinghies are probably one of the best known classes on the Broads. Originally the actual dinghies in attendance on the larger yachts, they sailed for many years under simple restrictions only, with the result that great scope was left for the initiative of the builder, and an extremely sporting class grew up. They were 14 feet in length, with a balance-lug sail not exceeding 140 square feet in area, and a centre plate not exceeding 80 pounds in weight, and some hundreds of boats have been built and raced. Space does not permit mention being made of many that have made history, like the famous old

*Irene*, built in 1907 by Charles Press of Wroxham from the moulds of Sir G. Chamberlin's well-remembered *Bonnie*; the *Surprise*, owned by H. Youngs; nor one which will never be forgotten by those who knew her, the *Kismet* of J. Colin Newman, and her adventures in 1919, 1920, and 1921.

In 1925 the 14-foot National Dinghy Class of the Yacht Racing Association was adopted on these waters, which in 1929 became the International Dinghy Class, all dinghies being now built to this specification. The Broads are looked upon as one of the great centres of dinghy racing, and Lowestoft has more than once been selected as the venue for the race for the cup presented by the Prince of Wales.

About 1903 a class of 12-foot One Design Dinghies was started, and several boats were built to it, but it did not last very long.

The racing rules of all the clubs are those of the Yacht Racing Association, with a few slight modifications to suit local conditions, any disputes or 'protests' being settled by the Sailing Committee of the club holding the regatta.

All the racing on the Broads is co-ordinated nowadays by the Norfolk and Suffolk Regatta Association, which, as the outcome of a conference held in Norwich in 1894, was originally formed to ensure uniformity of action and promote clean sailing, more particularly at the various regattas held by riverside towns and villages. Of recent years, however, foul sailing is almost unknown, and the association's work mainly consists in adjusting the programmes of the various clubs, so as to avoid clashing of dates, and in adjudicating upon such matters as are referred to it.

To describe a yacht race, to give any real idea of the thrill and excitement to those taking part, is an almost impossible task in cold print.

In Part I of this book, pages 143 and 144, will be found an excellent description of a regatta on Wroxham Broad, which takes place as a rule towards the end of July.

With the exception, however, of the open regattas at Beccles, Horning, Potter Heigham, and on Wroxham and Oulton Broads, where generally there is a band to liven things

up, often there are aquatic sports, and all the populace flock down to the waterside, the majority of the regattas on the rivers are much more sedate affairs, though intensely interesting to the yachting fraternity and their friends.

The onlooker on shore sees, lining the banks on both sides of the river for perhaps half to three-quarters of a mile, a line of yachts of all sizes and descriptions, all gaily bedecked with flags, sometimes with balloons as well, and animated with lively parties on each.

Years ago the yachts would have consisted chiefly of cabin cruisers, ranging from the stately barge yacht of perhaps twenty-five tons down to the little single-cabin cruiser, interspersed here and there by a pleasure wherry or steam-launch and by half-decked day-boats, dinghies, etc. But since 1914 great changes have come, and the large sailing yacht is almost a thing of the past. The coming of the internal combustion engine has brought not only large numbers of motor-launches, but motor-cruisers; and house-boats, moved about by a motor-launch, take the place of the larger sailing craft. Numbers of the smaller sailing yachts may still be seen, however, being very popular for letting purposes, and all along the bank the spectator will constantly see the various one-designs, dinghies, etc., which take part in the racing. Nowadays, too, the gramophone or the wireless may often be heard on various craft, all adding to the liveliness of the scene.

Hastening up and down the bank will be twos and threes of the crews going to or coming from their craft, and somewhere at a suitable spot will probably be found the Yare and Bure Sailing Club's house-boat, which serves as a committee boat and marks the starting and finishing line.

Suddenly the sharp report of a gun is heard, a flag flutters up the signal-mast, and from various points the boats competing in the race about to start gather near the line, twisting in and out, dodging across and across, and manœuvring up and down for position, till inevitably it seems there must be collision after collision. But no; all at once one notices that they are all heading for the line, the 'bang' of the starting-gun makes us jump, and away the whole flotilla of perhaps eight or ten boats goes streaming up the river.

The course is marked by buoys at each end, and by the time those in the race have reached the first buoy and returned, the cluster has generally drawn out into more or less a procession and the three or four rounds which constitute the race provide to those on the bank an ever-changing kaleidoscope of passing and re-passing boats. Often when the breeze is strong the wash rocks the craft along the bank as they pass, and their crews may be seen hanging out to windward to assist in holding them up, while the helmsman wears a determined look as he is ever on the alert for slight favouring puffs or to score an advantage over his opponents.

In dinghies and one-design racing the first boat to finish is the winner ; but in handicap classes, like the cruisers or open and half-decked boats, a prearranged time-allowance has to be deducted from the time taken by each boat to complete the course, and often the second or third boat ultimately proves to be the winner.

To those fortunate enough to be taking part in an actual race matters become much more strenuous and very thrilling. Probably the most exciting race of all is to be had in the A Class cruisers, though I know many men who claim first place for the Raters, and if one is at the helm few boats equal one of the Broads One Designs. But in a cruiser, the size of the craft and her canvas, the larger crew, the numerous ropes to be tended, and the intoxicating speed and rush throughout, all give a life and exhilaration which is absent from the smaller boats.

One joins the ship generally during the preceding race, dressed in any old clothes, and prepared to get wet. The larger cruisers carry five or six as crew, the smaller cruisers three or four, and the one-designs generally either two or three, while a dinghy's crew consists of two.

Of recent years ladies have come very much to the foreground in yachting on the Broads, and in all the smaller boats are to be found at the helm as often as mere men, while fourteen of the four One Design classes are owned by ladies.

But to revert to our preparations for a race, for time is slipping away and the preceding race is finishing. Having set the canvas and made sure everything is taut and trim, we let



REGATTA AT HICKLING





go from the bank and slip out into the stream, to find our fellow-competitors doing likewise. Soon we are a cheery little crowd of boats, hovering near the starting-line, anxiously fumbling for stop-watches, and performing intricate twists and turns to keep clear, not always quite successfully, of the other boats. One of the crew is generally deputed to act as 'time-keeper', and, armed with a stop-watch, the time of the 'ten-minute gun' is generally taken, and the time of the 'five-minute gun' always. From this last gun the passing minutes and seconds are carefully checked off, while the helmsman has an exacting time keeping clear of other boats in the cluster crowding down upon the starting-line, and in manœuvring for the best possible position, generally the windward one, for the start. During these last hectic five minutes all the racing rules are in force, and constantly boats are being caught on the port tack and having to put about, or, more fortunate, are putting some one else about. But if one's efforts prove reasonably successful the last few seconds before the start sees us all sweeping down to the line, our view shut in by sails everywhere, the banks sliding past as vague, misty streaks, and the sharp 'bang!' just before we reach it sends us tearing across and away with a light heart. Now we're off! Woe betide the unfortunate who is 'over' the line, for many minutes will elapse ere he has got clear of his competitors, turned round, re-crossed the line, and re-started.

After the thrill and excitement of the start one settles down to the steady work of the race, the helmsman (or helmswoman) to the most important business of steering, the others to their respective sheets, or whatever job they may have. Always one's competitors are the main source of interest—where they are, what they are doing, and, above all, how they are doing it—and on a reach one has time to look at them; but tacking, the boards are short, almost continuously there is something to do, and tremendous sheets of canvas loom up and disappear, boats and heads come and go, and as she heels to the freshening breeze a vast expanse of waves, and the swish of them streaming from our bows, become the principal features of our world. Always the banks, which on shore seem so prominent, are sliding past as vague streams of colour and objects, about

which one knows nothing and cares less. All we can think of is the race. At intervals we reach a buoy ; with a flapping of sails and sheets round we go ; sometimes a cluster of boats reaches a mark all at once, and the excitement of the start is repeated ; then away once more for the next stretch.

Running off the wind is the time, however, for a little relaxation, for a few words of comment, a cigarette ; but spells of running are all too short, and we are hard at it again to windward on the next round. Long before one feels one has got fairly started, just as one is beginning to feel that here really is the life worth living, the boom of the finishing gun tells us that the first boat is home and the race nearly over. Lucky are we if we are the first to take the gun, but more often than not it only remains to cross the line, have our 'time taken', and work back to our moorings, lower our canvas, and tie up.

Weather naturally makes a great difference in the pleasure of a race. Hardly anything is more depressing than drifting along in an open dinghy in a calm when it is raining ; on the other hand, rain with a good breeze is hardly noticed, so keen is the pleasure of a good sail. And when the sun comes out and shines, and we are favoured with a fine whole-sail breeze as well, when the wind hums tunefully through the taut rigging and the sparkling water gurgles merrily along the lee rail, no sport, no excitement on the face of the earth can compare with the joy of yacht-racing.

## CHAPTER XXI

### FISHING <sup>1</sup>

BY A. J. RUDD

THE Broadland of Norfolk and Suffolk, being for the most part flat, is watered by rivers unusually slow of current. In these rivers coarse fish abound in far greater numbers than in any other part of England, and the bottom fishing of the district is among the best in the world. We are not favoured with periodic visits from the lordly salmon now, though in years gone by the Yare was a salmon river, as may be seen from old records, in certain manors of the district, which contain accounts of purchases of these fish from the owners of the mills which span the rivers. Nor are trout to be found in any quantity in any but the uppermost parts of the streams. In the upper Wensum they have been preserved for some years, and have thrived to a degree unsurpassed except in a very few of the more highly preserved waters of the southern counties. In the upper waters of the Bure they are also found, but are not nearly so large nor so plentiful as in the Wensum. These trout waters are strictly preserved by the lords of the manors and the riparian owners.

The waters available to the angler-tourist are the Yare below Norwich, the Bure below Wroxham, and that part of the Waveney which lies between Geldeston and Breydon Water. On the Yare bream and roach are caught in great quantities during the summer months, the best part of the river being from Surlingham to Cantley. On the Bure, bream, roach, and perch are taken, with sometimes a few rudd and an occasional tench. On the Waveney, bream are chiefly taken on the lower reaches, and roach on the upper, towards Beccles. In the latter part of the summer a number of pike are caught on all these waters on baits trailed behind rowing boats, or even

<sup>1</sup> For a list of the Fishes of Broadland, see Appendix.

yachts, when the wind is very light ; but pike-fishing is more a winter sport in this district than in most parts of England.

The principal fish, then, for the visitor are bream and roach, and for these the same tackle serves for all the waters. Before describing the tackle necessary for the rivers and Broad's, it may, however, be as well to look at the fishes for a short time, commencing with the pike, which is the great game of the district. Here it thrives to a remarkable degree, the slow-running rivers and the large lagoon-like Broad's suiting its habits admirably, while the myriads of small roach found in every piece of water afford it an inexhaustible supply of food. This fact no doubt accounts for its being so difficult to catch at certain times of the year. The best pike-fishing is obtained in the winter months, from November to the beginning of March ; and the best places are, of course, the preserved Broad's. Here pike grow to an immense size, twenty pounds not being considered by local anglers a fish worth preserving. Some of this size are taken every season, and fish of twenty-five or even thirty pounds are not uncommon. The heaviest fish I have seen was a magnificent specimen of thirty-six pounds.

Next to the pike, the perch is the best fish we have in our waters, both for the sport he gives when hooked, and his excellent table qualities. He is the handsomest of fresh-water fishes, with his beautiful iridescent bronze coat barred with dark green, and his brilliantly vermilion-coloured fins. The perch is distributed over all the waters, but not in very large quantities.

Bream, as I have said, are found almost everywhere. These fish attain a very large size, five pounds being a not uncommon weight, and six pounds by no means a record. When of this size, the bream is a brown, flat-sided, lazy creature, and has been aptly compared with a pair of bellows.

The roach is a far more sporting fish, and is also to be found in all the waters. Of more athletic build than the bream, he takes the angler's bait with less deliberation, and gives proportionately more play when hooked. The only fish the angler is likely to mistake for a roach is the rudd. The latter are found on many of the Broad's and some of the Bure reaches in fair numbers, and are good fighting fish. The





BREAM-FISHING NEAR ST. BENET'S ABBEY



difference between the two fish is that the dorsal fin is directly over the ventral in the roach, whereas in the rudd it is placed some distance behind it. The rudd, too, is rather more golden in colour than its cousin, and the fins are of a brighter red.

Tench are more numerous in our rivers than most anglers imagine ; on some of the Broadlands where the rod fails to catch half a dozen in a season, they are taken in great numbers in bow-nets. During very hot weather a few are taken in the Bure at Wroxham and Horning, and in the Yare at Buckenham.

Every angler who has fished in Norfolk waters knows the ruffe, or pope, as he is called in the north. A miniature perch, he bites as freely at anglers' baits, and sometimes one gets such a lot of them in the swim that they are an intolerable nuisance, for they are not big enough to give any sport, and are of no use for eating.

Bream and roach are the principal fish caught by the angler in Broadland, and, indeed, it is scarcely worth while trying to make a basket of any other kinds, except very occasionally when the perch are on the feed ; and, again, one might have a day at the rudd on such waters as Barton.

The rod for fishing in these waters should be light enough to strike a roach, and strong enough to play a heavy bream. One about twelve feet long, or even a little longer, and with a perfect action, not too much down in the butt, is a useful weapon. It should be fitted with fixed rings, and a suitable reel carrying about thirty yards of fine silk line, which may be the ordinary plaited silk or the same water-proofed, as the angler prefers. The reel should be fitted with some kind of guard or guide for the line, preferably the 'Rudd-Barton' combined brake and line guide, which serves the double purpose of keeping the line in its proper position and forming an efficient brake either for casting from the reel or putting pressure on the fish. Some floats, casts, hooks, and a landing-net complete the outfit.

Of baits for coarse fish the best are worms, either lob or brandling, for the bream, and paste or gentles for the roach. Ground-bait is sold ready made in a powder form by most tackle-makers, and has only to be mixed with water and

kneaded into firm balls. Boiled wheat and boiled rice are also used, and are splendid ground-baits for roach and bream : the choicest corns of either can be used as hook-baits, occasionally being more seductive than any other lure.

In Broadland the river banks are for the most part reedy and being, moreover, private property, there is very little bank-fishing. Boats are plentiful and cheap at most fishing stations, and from a boat one can fish far out into the stream with a short rod. This is most essential, as the rivers are deepest in the middle, and it is there that the fish congregate. There, too, the water, being constantly on the move either up or down, and often disturbed by passing yachts and barges, is more free from weeds than nearer the edges.

During the summer months the best places to fish are on the middle reaches of the rivers. On the Yare, during July and August, good sport is to be had from Brundall to Cantley, and occasionally down as far as Reedham. The Bure is always good from Horning to Acle Bridge, and the Waveney from Beccles to Oulton Dyke. Above and below these points the amount of sport to be obtained fluctuates with the condition of the waters. High up-stream, these rivers are, of course, subject to rise and fall according to the amount of rain, and they are clear or thick as the rain has been little or much ; low down they are affected by the rise and fall of the tide at Yarmouth Bar. During certain winds the water in the rivers is very much higher and saltier than during the prevalence of winds from other directions ; sometimes the salt water comes up for miles, and consequently the fish are driven up the rivers. Bream do not object to a slight brackishness as do roach, and they are often found very low down the rivers, especially if the tides have been low and the salt water has been kept down by a heavy rainfall. At certain times of the year, generally in September and February, a large quantity of bream come up the Yare as far as Norwich, and are caught in great numbers within the city boundary. The reason for this periodical migration is difficult to understand, unless it be that the fish like the thick water ; and, of course, the water is always more discoloured in these months than at any other time of the year, except during very hot weather, when a curious phenomenon

occurs. The water, as the weather becomes warmer, is gradually discoloured to a degree eminently suited to the roach fishermen, by the constant disturbance of the thick beds of mud at the bottom of the rivers and Broads, occasioned by the expansion and liberation of the gases generated by the decomposition of the mud. When a heavy storm occurs, say at Norwich, the rain discolours the water as far down as Bramerton, below which all the colouring matter is deposited or filtered out by the weeds. From Bramerton downwards the effect of the storm is to clear the water by lowering its temperature and causing a cessation of the rising of the gases from the bottom. As I have endeavoured to explain, these different conditions of the water all affect sport more or less; but by the exercise of a little judgment the visiting angler can generally rely on getting all the fishing he cares for on the middle reaches of the rivers, where these conditions are not so pronounced as higher up or lower down stream.

In selecting the swim for a day's fishing, the angler should find a place sheltered from the wind, at the side of a long reach or in the hollow of a bend in the river—never off a point. It does not matter which side of the river he fishes, except in one part of the Bure—from Horning to St. Benet's Abbey—where the Ranworth side is the best, owing to the water being deeper there. When fishing on 'a Broad', if shelter cannot be obtained from the banks or reed-beds, the boat should be moored across the wind so as to keep it off the water in front of the angler. Not that the wind is any disadvantage, except for the difficulty of seeing a bite when the float is constantly moving up and down on the ripples. On the other hand, a slight ruffling of the surface is of advantage if the water is clear, as it prevents the angler being easily seen by the fish. If no lee can be obtained, legering should be resorted to in place of float-fishing.

In fishing for roach with float tackle, the exact depth of the water should be ascertained by means of the plummet, and the float so set that the hook travels along just clear of the bottom. Any alteration in the depth of the water, owing to the rising or falling of the tide, should be met with a corresponding alteration in the depth of line from float to hook.



In fishing for bream this is not so essential. So long as the bait is on the bottom, it matters not whether the hook drag be one inch or six. When changing hooks—a bream for a roach hook, or a roach for a bream hook—this alteration should be made to suit the habits of the fish. A roach must not be given an inch of slack or his bite will be missed, whereas a bream, if given line enough, will almost hook himself.

In fishing the Yare below Buckenham, the Bure below Thurne Mouth, and the Waveney below Burgh St. Peter, or anywhere where the current is strong, the leger is generally used in preference to float tackle, as the latter is so soon swept down by the rapid flow of the water that the swims are very short. Most anglers know what a 'leger' is; but for the benefit of those who do not, I may say that it consists of a yard or more of gut, on which a pierced bullet is threaded: a hook is fixed above and below the bullet, which lies on the bottom. The line being kept taut from this to the rod-top, the bite of the fish is detected by the 'feel' instead of by sight. The bait, being always quite on the bottom, seems to be generally more effective than with float tackle, larger fish being taken with the leger as a rule. In legering for bream lob worms are the most frequently used bait; but large pieces of bread paste kill roach and bream equally well. It is a good plan in legering to squeeze a lump of ground-bait round the bullet and cast it out in that way; it is then kept closer to the hooks than when thrown out in handfuls into the stream. The leger should be cast down-stream, not across, as many anglers cast it, as this prevents the hooks being washed back on to the line by the current. The weight of the lead should be just sufficient to hold the bottom and no more, as it is a great advantage to be able to let it go farther down-stream a yard or two at a time, by slightly lifting the point of the rod. By this means the hooks are kept over the ground-bait, which as it breaks up, is carried down by the current.

On the main rivers, and on such deep Broad as Wroxham it is not necessary to fish very far away from the boat; in fact the working line below the rod-point need be no longer than the rod itself; but for fishing on shallow waters like Barton and Hickling Broad, and Heigham Sound, a long line must

be cast. At these places the water is so shallow and clear that it is impossible to get very close to the fish with the boat, and to be successful the angler must be able to throw out at least twenty yards of line. A fairly heavy float is necessary : some experienced fishermen use a pike pilot-float with a small barrel lead to keep it down and give sufficient weight to enable a long cast to be made. Bream and rudd are the fish principally caught on these waters. The latter are excellent fighting fish, yielding good sport to any one who can cast a fly or a bunch of gentles on a fly rod. There is no better sport than rudd-fishing on a warm summer evening. The Broad, with its fringe of green rushes and reeds, is at its best in the soft sunlight ; not a sound breaks the stillness save the cries of the water-fowl or the splash of the fish ; except where the fish are rolling about at the top of the water, the surface is as smooth as a mirror. The boat is rowed quietly to within casting distance of the reeds, and, tackle being in readiness, a cast is made towards the shore. The flies alight on the water without a splash, and are then slowly drawn towards the angler. And now a great wave breaks the placid surface, and the tightening line and bending rod tell of a good fish hooked. Have a care or he will take your delicate cast round the nearest bolder<sup>1</sup> and smash you to a certainty ! Steadily putting pressure on the fast-tiring fish, you draw him away from his safety and your danger, till a dip of the net lands him, kicking and gasping, in the bottom of the boat. So you go on ; cast after cast you rise the fish but do not always hook them, and now and again you lose cast, flies, and fish as some monster defeats you. Almost any thick-bodied flies will do for rudd ; but there are occasions when half a dozen gentles on a fairly large hook, cast in the same way as the fly, are a better lure. Great care has to be exercised in throwing the gentles, for they are tender creatures, and anything like a jerk will flick them off the hook.

Although the Broadland waters abound with pike, these fish are not often caught by the summer visitor. In July and August, it is true, some quantity of small fish is taken, but nothing in comparison with what is caught later in the

<sup>1</sup> See Glossary.

season. Occasionally pike feed well in the early part of the autumn on the Yare, and great numbers are caught on spoon and other baits, either trailing behind rowing boats or cast out and drawn in again in the usual spinning style. As many as twenty fish in a day have fallen to a single rod, the fish ranging from three to ten pounds in weight, and, in the strong water of this river, giving excellent sport for their size. During the late autumn, as a rule, sport with the pike is not very good, but with the advent of cold wintry weather the fish become ravenous, and from the end of November to the middle of March good bags may be relied on, upon any of the Broadwaters. Of waters that are open to the tourist, either by reason of their being tidal and free, or on payment of a small fee where private, Rockland on the Yare and Oulton on the Waveney may be mentioned as free, and Hickling Broad and Heigham Sounds on the Thurne, Barton Broad on the Ant, and Woodbastwick, Salhouse, and Wroxham Broad on the Bure can be fished on payment of from two to five shillings a boat a day. These waters may be considered to rank, for the amount of sport they give, in the order in which I have placed them. Rockland yields an immense number of fish in the early season. Oulton is very good, but it is much fished; the other Broadwaters are all good at times. Some amount of local knowledge is necessary for success on such large waters as Hickling and Barton, but the angler who patiently and skilfully fishes along by the reed-beds fringing the margin of the Broadwaters or the banks of weed in the middle will be sure of sport.

Of the various means of catching pike the most common in this district is with live bait on snap tackle; next to this, spinning with a dead fish on a flight of hooks. Spinning is no doubt the more artistic method, and is also the most killing. With a spinner the angler covers more water than by any other means, and the bait is presented in a more attractive manner. Very often when the angler has tried all over a bay with live bait without so much as a touch from a fish, the first cast with a spinning bait hooks a good fish. As an instance of this, on one occasion in the winter of 1900, two anglers had been fishing all day from the same boat without a run, when late in the afternoon one of them thought he would

HICKLING BROAD







try spinning. He did so, and at the very first cast took a fish of twenty-six pounds within a few yards of his companion's float, and followed up this with two other fish of twenty-two pounds and twenty pounds. This is not a solitary instance, but the results here were better than in any other case I know of.

In spinning on a Broad, it is a good plan, if the wind is light, to allow the boat to drift with the wind down one shore, and as the water is thus covered to cast out first up to the reeds and then out into the open till the end of the Broad is reached. The angler should then cross the Broad and pursue the same tactics along the other bank. Of course, if the wind is strong such manœuvring is impracticable; the plan then is to moor the boat opposite each bay in succession, moving on as each has been thoroughly fished. Sometimes it is as well to put out a live bait into the bay while a spinner is cast out on the other side of the boat; but this is not recommended if the fish are at all on the feed, and should only be adopted as a last resource when things have been very slow and one feels the necessity for retrieving the fortunes of the day somehow.

When fishing with live bait alone, the usual way is to fish in the different bays as recommended for spinning on a windy day; and it is generally found that the angler who can cast his bait nearest to the reeds without getting 'hung up', has the best sport, because the fish, as a rule, lie quiet in the reeds, and only come out to feed. In some places, where the reed-beds are very wide, it is a good plan to drive the fish from their lairs before beginning to cast for them. This may be done by taking an oar or a mooring pole and splashing about with it in the water near the bank, or, if the reeds are not too dense, the boat may be forced round the back of the bed. In some places the reed-beds are quite hollow beneath, and if the fish are not driven out the sport is very limited.

On many of the Broads the water is very much deeper at one end or side than at the other: this is particularly noticeable on such Broads as lie alongside the rivers, and points to the fact that at one time they formed parts of the rivers. This should be noted by the pike-fisher, as, according to the season of the year, the pike lie in deep or shallow water, deep

at the beginning and shallow at the end of the season, preparatory to their ascending the dykes and drains to spawn.

#### NOTE.

The close season for freshwater fish on the Norfolk and Suffolk Rivers and Broads is from March 15th to June 15th, both dates inclusive, excepting Easter Bank Holiday or any of the three preceding days, and Whit Monday and either of the two preceding days. The close time applies to Oulton Broad (Suffolk) as well as the Norfolk Broads. Heigham Sounds are closed for angling during the wild-fowl shooting and breeding season from October 1st to June 3rd.

The following fish sizes are fixed and any smaller ones taken must be at once returned to the water : pike, 21 inches ; bream, 8 ; carp, 8 ; tench, 8 ; perch, 8 ; roach, 6 ; rudd, 6 ; and dace, 6. Small roach, rudd and dace may be taken for use as bait.

All anglers on the Broads and Rivers must obtain a Fishery Board licence, on sale at post offices in the towns and villages along the river-sides.

Particulars as to the various charges made for fishing private or preserved Broads should be obtained locally.

## CHAPTER XXII

### WILD-FOWLING

BY NICHOLAS EVERITT AND A. H. PATTERSON

**I**N the early days when Broadland was one vast fenland the district must have been a veritable paradise for the wild-fowler. Drainage, as we know it, was practically unknown, and the Yare, Waveney, and Bure valleys were wide swamps overflowed by the flood tides and everywhere intersected by reed-beds and sheets of open water such as may be seen in the south of Sweden, the morasses of Spain and on the lower banks of the Danube.

With the increase of population necessitating continual extension of farming and increased use of our river-ways for commercial purposes, the river walls were thrown up and the great acreage of shallows separated from the deeper streams flowing through them. Water-mills, sturdy of tower, but without the picturesque elaboration of the Dutch type, were erected, and a rapid change came about. It is said that Henry VII encouraged this scheme of things, and ever since then drainage has been constantly extended and perfected. The family of Banham, who have been for generations marshmen, and whose duties have included control of mills and maintenance of river walls, dates back at least four hundred years.

What these lowlands, where sleek cattle now flourish, were like over a hundred years ago is described by the 'father' of punt-gunners and fowlers, Colonel Hawker. Even then he refers to the winter shooting in the fens as being very 'much drained by cultivation, by which the wild parts are less extensive'. He visited the Broads district in 1816, and more particularly the neighbourhood of Hickling, finding it 'far superior [to the fen country], and the variety of wild birds here was such that, in the breeding season, you might kill from

twenty to thirty different sorts in a day. Some, by the by . . . I was favoured with a sight of . . . that were not seen in Bewick, by that excellent sportsman, the late C. Girdlestone, Esq., which he had in his private collection at Yarmouth.' He mentions the difficulty they found in avoiding treading on the close-placed nests and eggs of terns, plovers (lapwings), redshanks, 'and almost every other kind of marsh bird'. On Horsey Mere and Heigham Sounds, within sight of the sea, the fowl in winter dropped in, on their passage from Holland to the south, 'and literally blackened' the waters, where they believed themselves protected by the surrounding ice. There it would certainly be difficult for fowlers to use their scows, their flint-locks, and their bell-mouthed punt-guns.

As evidence of the effects of improved drainage, the Colonel, on the occasion of a later visit, in 1824, relates that he came here 'and found that owing to the drains for cultivation, and increase of the decoys, the quantity of the birds is, and has for some years been, so much reduced' that he had 'to revise his next edition from the past to the present time'. Hawker does not appear to have visited Breydon, or he would, in all probability, have described an abundance of wild birds almost unimaginable by those who know the estuary to-day.

Fifty or sixty years ago good wild-fowling was still to be had on the Broads. Flight-shooting then was easy to enjoy and undisturbed by keepers who had the interests of their pheasants at heart and did not believe in free shooting. The local marshmen then had the greater share of it. L. H. de Visme Shaw<sup>1</sup> tells us that in order to put themselves on more favourable terms with duck than they would be if their barrels carried a surface gloss, 'the old Norfolk fowlers used purposely to rust their gun-barrels . . . and in times of snow cover them with whitening.' And he goes on to say: 'What guns those fen wild-fowlers carried! The "handful" served as the shot measure when loading. Little is it to be wondered at, considering the standing belief that a gun was only properly loaded when at its discharge the gunner could just hold it and just remain on his feet, that the bursting of these weapons should have been comparatively common. Magnificent shots

<sup>1</sup> *Wild-Fowl*, p. 70.



*Frank S. H. H. H.*

DUCK-SHOOTING FROM REED-SCREENS OVER DECOYS





were often made at flight-time and by night. In some of the villages bordering the marshes of Norfolk the men were duck-shooters almost without exception. Haddiscoe is a notable example. There, some sixty or seventy years ago' (this was written in 1905), 'the whole village, headed by the parson, would turn out at flight-time and scatter themselves over the marshes.'

Last Farman, himself one of these Haddiscoe marshmen-fowlers, has given us some account of sport around his own village as he knew or heard tales of it about the beginning of the present century. He writes: 'Some of the fowlers can be seen at the present day carrying scars imprinted fifty years ago. In these days of overloading it was nothing unusual to find the old shooting-iron standing bolt-upright like a telegraph pole in the soft, boggy soil at the rear of the sportsman's prostrated form. . . . The bursting of these old guns was not a very rare occurrence, and some of the gunners yet survive, minus a finger or two and with sundry scratches through these mishaps. Sometimes, while a fowler was sitting on his little square board, Morpheus would get the upper hand of him. One tells the tale of going to sleep in this fashion, and waking up and somewhat recovering his senses at the hour of midnight, the ducks making merry within a few yards of his shivering carcass, and he almost too numb with cold to put himself in walking position. No wonder rheumatism showed up so prominently in the old duck-shooter of fifty years ago. . . . Other incidents yet cling to the mind of the grey-headed fowler, such as falling into a ditch or through the ice, or losing himself on the marsh on a foggy night, there to tramp about till daylight appeared and relieved his troubled mind and aching limbs, the accidental shooting of a fellow-fighter in mistake for something better, and other items too numerous to mention.'

Before boat-letting became an industry on the Broads and rivers the yachtsman could shoot over many miles of waterway; but to-day free shooting here is almost entirely a thing of the past. The Broads are now a closely protected preserve of the landed proprietors or holders of shooting rights, and are more or less bird sanctuaries in the close season. The

fenman of the earlier part of the nineteenth century, so well described by Richard Lubbock in his *Fauna of Norfolk* (1848), is no more like the Broadsmen of to-day than a match-lock is like a safety-gun. The only 'free' shooting here to-day is obtained, or attempted, with the aid of a detestable small air-gun, used on such small game as swallows and an occasional moor-hen—and these usually have the better of the attempt and escape. It was usual for the early writers on the Broad to describe the navigable rivers as being public highways, free to all; and it is as well to repeat what an excellent writer, who had been misinformed, said of this privilege: 'A shot at a crested grebe or heron seems to be an irresistible temptation to some of the river-men, especially as they find a ready market for any of the rarer species of water-fowl they may get.' To shoot a beautiful loon or passing teal is a useless proceeding, giving pain to the lover of Broadland birds. It is pleasant to know that collections of stuffed 'authenticated' birds have become unpopular and ceased to provoke indiscriminate slaughter—a fact partly due, perhaps, to the increased popularity of golfing and other outdoor sports and also to a growing preference for watching and photographing birds in their natural haunts.

The best shooting in Broadland is found upon Ranworth Great Broad, Hoveton, Hickling, Barnby, Buckenham, Woodbastwick Broad, and Horsey Mere; but most of these waters are let with the shooting on the adjoining estates, and the purse must be deep to enable one to rent one of them if only for a single season. In these private waters it is usual to erect small screens or shelters, which are made by raising platforms, three or four feet square, about a foot and a half above high water, and surrounding them with four reed-screens between four and five feet high. The shooter can conceal himself behind them with ease, and they are approached from the 'mainland' by narrow banks or plankways. In connexion with them decoys, alive or artificial, are often used with considerable success.

On the day of the shoot, before the party starts, a stated time is fixed and given to each shooter, and whatever happens no gun may be fired before the time agreed upon. This is

done in order to give each gun a chance of getting to his stand before the fowl become alarmed. One of the party (generally the host) proceeds to wade through and between the many reed-beds which intersect or border the shores of the Broad, and as soon as the time-limit has expired any one may take advantage of the best shot offered.

At first gun-fire the fowl on the water rise and circle in all directions ; possibly there may be only a very small quantity, possibly there may be from five hundred to a couple of thousand, and during the ensuing ten minutes every barrel may become uncomfortably warm. After this fusillade the birds leave the water for quieter and more secluded quarters ; but within half an hour a great number will return, and if the shooter is still concealed and remains quite quiet they will dip to the surface of the water and offer further opportunities. Large quantities of fowl, however, are not killed in this way, forty or fifty being a good bag, although on one occasion the writer was fortunate enough to be one of a party which gathered seventy-three duck and mallard and one coot before lunch in a shoot of this description.

On Hickling Broad (which consists of several hundred acres of open water, reed-beds, and swamps) there has been held from time immemorial an annual coot-shoot, which is a very interesting function to attend. At one time the fixture was open to anybody who chose to participate in it ; but since the Hickling Broad case was fought in London the shooting has been let, and this local event, so far as the general sporting public is concerned, has become a thing of the past. The shoots, however, are carried out upon lines very similar to those of earlier years. The guns divide themselves into two parties—one manning the boats, the other keeping to the shore. During the summer coots breed almost unmolested on all the private Broads, and in winter congregate in great numbers on the largest sheets of open water they can find, remaining there until driven away by frost. The coot rarely takes to wing unless driven to do so by force of circumstances. The party on shore proceeds to some bay previously agreed upon, which they surround, concealing themselves behind reed-stacks, gate-posts, screens, or the friendly shelter of the

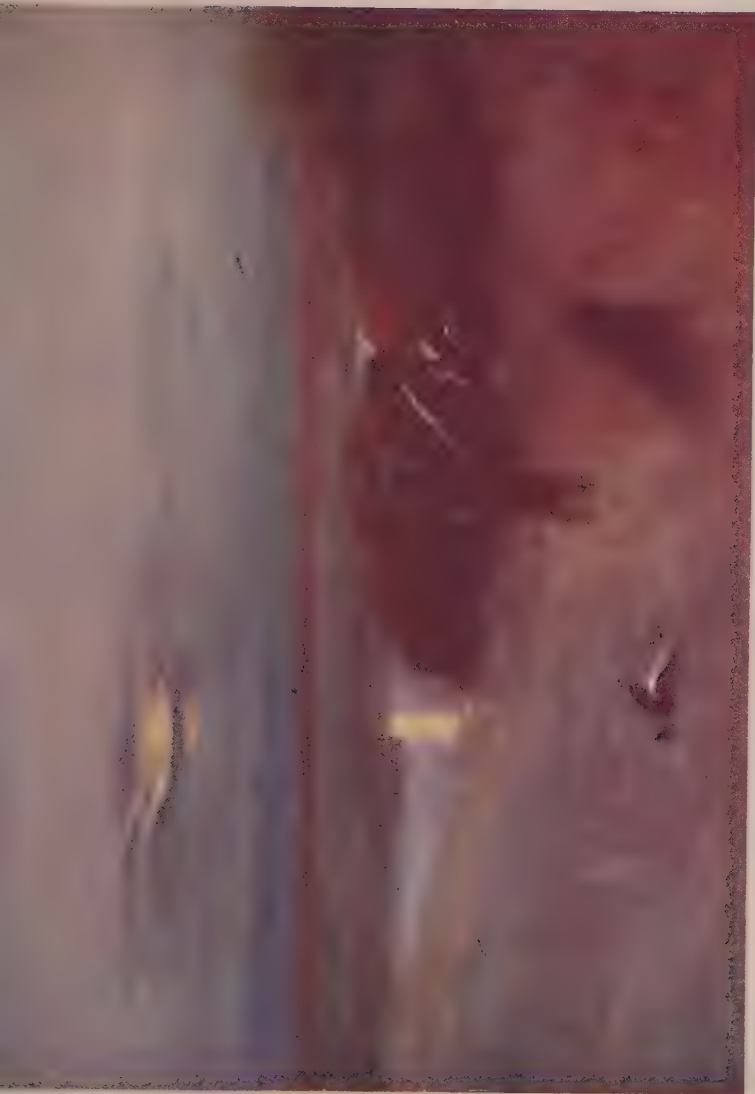
river wall, whilst the boats spread out in line and row after the birds, which swim before them faster than a boat can be rowed or pushed. They are thus driven, like a flock of sheep, in the direction required. When the boats press the birds into the bay they swim to the reeds, then endeavour to fly back to the open water by circling overhead. So soon as the birds are completely surrounded all the guns show themselves, and a battue, which must be participated in to be fully realized, takes place. At these shoots some hundreds of coots are bagged, and the sport, though dangerous, is considered good.

Sixty years ago there were many men in Norfolk and Suffolk who obtained a partial livelihood from shooting rare waders and water-fowl that arrived in the spring and the bulk of which passed on in May. At other seasons of the year eel-spearing and babbling, smelting, mulleting, mushrooming and up-river 'icing' for the Yarmouth and Lowestoft fish markets were among the occupations pursued by these men.

The punt-gun is not allowed on Hickling Broad, nor anywhere in the neighbourhood, unless it is used by the private owners or by their favour. In years gone by the big gun was carried on Oulton Broad, but the conditions obtaining there to-day, with houses and yachts all round, will no longer permit of its use. There is little for shoulder-gunners to shoot beyond a horde of useless gulls in stormy weather and a few 'hard fowl', such as scaups, tufted ducks, golden-eyes, and others of detestable flavour, so the 'game isn't worth the candle'.

On Breydon, in the earlier half of the nineteenth century, some twenty or thirty professional gunners were always to be found; but they began to dwindle away when the close season was instituted. It was not only the great shots made with their punt-guns that brought them in moderate and occasionally unexpected earnings. Bird collectors came from all parts to be taken to the mud-flats, and they paid handsomely for the opportunities afforded them. An occasional spoonbill or broad-billed sandpiper killed by a professional gunner brought him in a (to him) little fortune in those days of keen rivalry among collectors. In 1890 the Norwich Museum authorities purchased an example of the Caspian plover (*Aegialitis Asiatica*) which one of the writers obtained for them for





MOONRISE- AT FLIGHT



twelve pounds, the bird being about as big as a starling. To-day only two men who may be called professionals frequent Breydon, and only for about a tenth part of the year. A watcher occupies throughout the close season a snug houseboat in one of the 'drains', and keeps a sharp look-out for 'poaching', so that for a month at a time no sound of a shot is heard save when a marshman goes out to bag a rat.

In another chapter some explanation is given of how it has come about that Breydon has so greatly changed. Yet one other cause which has contributed to this may be mentioned. In recent years a very bad old custom of throwing floating rubbish, such as old fish-baskets, fish-boxes, old straw beds, and other litter into the river has prevailed. This refuse is frequently carried by the flood tide up Breydon, where it is floated on to the flats and held there by the matted *Zostera*, so that the ebb leaves it stranded there. Tides follow heavy with silt and mud which settle amidst and against these unsightly objects, and day after day fresh deposits are made in the same way. As a result the *Zostera* and other plant-life perish and eventually *Salicornia herbacea* establishes itself around the margins of the flats and helps to collect further refuse. In course of time the *Salicornia*, too, ceases to grow and rank grasses spring up in increasing patches. In addition to this the sharp fall of water at the confluence of the Yare and Bure brings down the silt from the river banks, while the greater scour caused by the lengthening of the North Pier at the harbour mouth has deepened the entrance by removing the sandbar. All these changes have contributed towards the elimination of a once-alluring bird-resort. For years the old Breydon men foresaw this, and in referring to it shook their heads and remarked, 'Breydon is done for,' and they foresaw with its decadence their own inevitable decline and passing away.

Perhaps the favourite branch of wild-fowling in Broadland is flight-shooting, of which there are (1) the evening flight, and (2) the morning flight.

Most shooters patronize the evening flight. Wild-fowl, as is commonly known, spend the day in the seclusion of some undisturbed haunt, and at sundown take wing to their feeding-grounds. During the months of August and September, when

the fields abound in corn, they flight, in the twilight, to the uplands, and excellent sport may be enjoyed by the fortunate individual who can obtain leave from some farming friend to shoot the fields so favoured. The best localities in Broadland are in the neighbourhoods of Ranworth, Horning, Hoveton, and Potter Heigham, and twenty or thirty duck and mallard is no record bag to obtain from an evening's fowling. One small field the writer knows of is surrounded by four Broad's and forms an island in their midst. In August, when this field has been cultivated with barley, peas, or such-like products, it is a veritable flight-shooter's paradise ; but the owner knows its value, and the shooting rights are never likely to be let.

As the season advances and the corn is gathered from the fields, wild-fowl flight from the Broad's to the rivers, spring drains, and secluded ponds, where they know they will find the food they love. These points of advantage must be watched for and noted by the fowler, who, if he is not fortunate enough to be able to hire or obtain the necessary permit to visit them, must do the next best thing he can by placing himself in the line of flight.

During August and September the yachtsman moored for the night in the neighbourhood of Horning Ferry was often astonished at the number of boats rowing downstream towards St. Benet's Abbey shortly after sundown. If he inquired, he was told that the Horseshoe Reach (about a quarter of a mile below the ferry) intersects one of the most favoured lines of flight for fowl coming and going between Ranworth Great Broad, Woodbastwick, and other wild-fowl sanctuaries. As the gloaming increased, the booming of guns, echoing and re-echoing over the marshes, told of the sport being obtained.

Evening flight does not last more than half an hour ; the shooting is difficult, and the birds still harder to secure after they have been brought down.

Morning flighting is more for those who have private waters frequented by wild-fowl than for the promiscuous gunner who picks up just what he can.

On the assumption that the wild-fowl which frequent a certain water leave it at dusk for the purpose of obtaining

food, or to visit other haunts to which their inclination or instinct lead them, the morning flighter betakes himself, an hour before daybreak, to the water so frequented, and conceals himself in reed-screens or huts made for the purpose. When the wild-fowl return to enjoy the seclusion of sanctuary during daylight they receive a welcome quite unexpected and much too warm for their liking. But this sport does not afford the same charm as evening fighting because of the irregularity of the return of the birds and the fact that the shots they offer are by no means so sporting as those obtained in the gloom of eventide.

During the spring of the year the common green plover, peewit, or lapwing scatter themselves over the commons, brecks, and moorlands of Norfolk for nesting purposes. As the autumn advances they collect in enormous flocks, frequenting both upland and marsh, and just before a frost excellent plover-shooting may be obtained at evening flight. About an hour before sundown thousands upon thousands of these birds, which have been feeding during the daytime upon the upland fields, may be seen flying in flocks overhead ; but when the sun has set they break up into twos and threes and scatter in all directions over the marsh levels, where they flutter about, like leaves driven before a storm, uttering their weird cries and offering to the shooter as many shots as he cares to take, alike sporting and most difficult. Occasionally flocks of golden plover rest a while in Norfolk on their way southward. Early in the evening these birds may easily be distinguished from others, as they, like geese, invariably fly in the V formation ; but later in the evening they fly so near the ground that they are difficult to see.

Snipe and redshank breed fairly freely in the wet swamps around Hickling, Ranworth, Horsey, Hoveton, Surlingham, and other Broad. Before the Wild Birds' Protection Act of 1880 came into force the landowners of these districts were wont to organize parties for the purpose of shooting young redshank in June, before they made off to the saltings. Snipe remain on the marshes where they are bred until shot, or until compelled to migrate southward owing to frost, and some fair bags may be obtained here and there ; but year by year, as



the marshlands become drier by draining, the weight of these bags diminishes.

Another branch of wild-fowling more or less peculiar to Broadland consists of shooting on decoy-fighting ponds ; this, however, is more or less artificial sport. The owner of a suitable shoot where wild-fowl can be encouraged digs, or otherwise forms, a series of small ponds at different parts of a beat. In these ponds he raises a considerable number of half-bred fowl, or hatches off a quantity of wild ducks' eggs. The young birds are hand-fed and allowed to do as they please until November. During the early part of that month the migratory fowl arrive, and are soon attracted by the hand-reared birds, with the result that the migrants take up their quarters with them, or at all events become nightly visitors to their ponds. As soon as the foreign birds have established a strong 'lead in', the flight-shooter commences operations, visiting one pond once a week all through the season. Screens or blinds are made and placed around each pond, so that the whole of the water can be commanded by the guns. The incoming fowl are generally allowed to alight upon the water before they are disturbed ; then a noise is made to alarm them, the birds fly up and are shot at, but not as often killed, as, owing to the uncertain light, they are very difficult indeed to hit. A rather extraordinary thing about this decoy-pond flight-shooting is that the hand-reared birds never seem to get shot. They mostly spend the daytime on the pond, leaving it early in the evening for the adjoining marsh ditches, where they pass the night. If this sport is properly worked excellent fighting can be obtained at small expense.

Shooting over wakes or broken places in the surface of an ice-bound Broad, with the assistance of decoys (as practised on the coasts of Scotland, Ireland, and elsewhere) is now practically unknown here, while shore-shooting in Broadland is not worthy of the name. The shooting in the roadsteads off the coast—which can hardly be included under the heading of Broadland wild-fowling—is dependent upon the weather and seems to attract fewer fowlers than it did some years ago.

Speaking generally, it is not correct to say that wild-fowling in Broadland is practically a thing of the past ; it is



DUCK-SHOOTING OVER DECOYS IN A WAKE



better to describe it as being almost entirely confined to private individuals. Yachtsmen thinking of visiting the district with the idea of enjoying sport with the gun are usually such as are unacquainted with the fact that a by-law made under the Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Act 1900 prohibits the use of any firearm or air-gun by any person 'while using, or while in, upon, or about the rivers Yare, Bure, or Waveney, or the banks or shore thereof, or any land of the Port and Haven Commissioners', provided always that the rights of the riparian owners of the land on either side of the river are not affected.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### FOLK-LORE—SOME LOCAL LEGENDS, BELIEFS AND SAYINGS

BY JAMES HOOPER AND WILLIAM A. DUTT

**A**LTHOUGH East Anglia cannot boast any such wealth of legendary lore as the west of England, a very good crop of local legends and beliefs may be gathered from various sources.

One of the most impressive phantoms, and one of the best known in Norfolk, is Old Shuck (Anglo-Saxon, *Scucca* = demon goblin), a demon dog, as big as a fair-sized calf, that pads about noiselessly under the shadow of hedgerows, tracking the steps of lonely wayfarers, and terrifying them with the wicked glare of his flaming eyes. To meet him means death within a year to the unhappy beholder. As Shuck sometimes leans his head at home, though his eyes are always seen as big as saucers, he is, as the late Mr. Walter Rye once wrote, 'an animal more avoided than respected'. One of his chief haunts is Neatishead Lane, near Barton Broad; but he also favours Coltishall Bridge, over which he always ambles with his head; and a very special promenade of his is from Beeston near Sheringham, to Overstrand, *after which his course is uncertain!* Which recalls the old adjuration in the legend of St. Margaret:

Still be thou, still,  
Poorest of all, stern one,  
Nor shalt thou, Old Shock,  
Meet with me no more.  
But fly, sorrowful thing,  
Out of mine eyesight,  
And dive thither where thou man  
May damage no more.

A near relation of Shuck must have been the Black Dog of Bungay, which, on Sunday, August 4th 1577, during a feast



orm, appeared in the Church of St. Mary at Bungay, 'running along down the body of the church with great swiftnesse and incredible haste among the people, in a visible fourm and ape, passed between two persons, as they were kneeling upon their knees, and occupied in prayer as it seemed, wrung the necks of them bothe at one instant clene backward, inso-much that even at a moment where they kneeled they strangely red'. It was said of a hardened sinner that he could no more blush than the Black Dog of Bungay. Sir Rider Haggard, writing of his parish of Ditchingham, opposite Bungay, on the Norfolk side of the Waveney, alludes to a vague belief, still current, that the devil, in the shape of the Black Dog of Bungay, may even now be met with thereabouts.

Yarmouth was formerly subject to visits from Old Scarp, who used to frequent Southtown Road, and who, besides the horror of his saucer eyes, jangled a heavy chain, and if a straw were placed in his path would rattle his chain menacingly and give forth terrifying howls. Something of the same kind was told of 'Rugusan', a little-known fiend having a limited habitat in a few inland Norfolk villages.

Of phantom coaches several are known to haunt the borders of Broadland, perhaps the most notable being a hearse-like vehicle, drawn by four black, headless horses, that once a year carries the hapless Anne Boleyn, with her gory head in her lap, through the main avenue of Blickling Park, while her executioner, for his share in her decapitation, is compelled to ride round and out over forty county bridges on the Bure and Yare every night. It is also common tradition that the leaden coffins of Sir Thomas and his daughter cannot lie still in their mausoleum, but shift and toss in agony of unrest at every new burial.

Another family in Norfolk with a similar legend were the Jennerhassetts, who had a house in Norwich, but acquired property at Barsham, near Beccles, by intermarriage, and it is an old tradition at Barsham that 'Old Blunderhazard' drives out every Christmas Eve, just before midnight, to visit Hassett's tower, at Norwich, and to return to Barsham before he may catch the morning air. Here, too, the horses are headless, and always with fire flashing from their nostrils. At Geldeston,

near Barsham, but on the other side of the Waveney, a similar phantom coach, drawn by horses with flaming *and smoking* nostrils, and in which one of the Bigods, Earls of Norfolk, rides, is heard rumbling down Bigod's Hill.

At Cantley, in the Yare valley, it is a horseman, who is headless, who rides at midnight from Callow Pit to Cantley Spong; while at Ranworth, on the Bure, a certain Colonel Sidney, known as the 'wicked colonel', who formerly owned the Ranworth estate, after living several years in wild debauchery, is said to have been carried off by the Devil, disguised as a cloaked horseman. The edge of Ranworth Broad was the place of their disappearance from human view, 'but ever since, so the story goes, the colonel's spectre always appears on the anniversary of his banishment, riding furiously at the head of his hounds round and round the Broad'.

Of yet another Boleyn ghost story the following confused version appeared in a local paper in August 1907: 'A legend runs that two gigantic warriors are annually to be seen fighting at the footbridge on the path from Braydeston Church to Blofield Church. The duel is fought with swords of fire when one is overcome the hill opens and receives him, and the other vanishes into space. The story goes that Lady Anne Boleyn and Sir Thomas Paston were neighbours at Blickling and Paston, and both at the court of Henry VIII. On the king's marriage with Anne, Paston became very jealous of the honours done to her family (or for the love of Lady Anne) and they became deadly enemies. This coming to the king's knowledge, he encouraged Paston in his treachery in order to prove Lady Anne guilty, and after her death Paston and Boleyn met at Baybridge and engaged in a duel in which Paston was killed. His servants and carriages were overturned into the stream below, and their necks broken in the fall, and, ever after, this scene is enacted on the date of the tragedy, when all parties are to be seen, with eight headless horses and four servants, all having a blue flame coming from their necks. The Lady Anne is generally in black velvet.'

A curious Devil story is told about Tunstall, a village overlooking the marshes which occupy a triangle between Reedham, Acle, and Yarmouth. The tower and nave of the church



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK



were long ago ruined by fire, and there is a persistent legend that the parson and churchwardens quarrelled for the possession of the bells, which were uninjured. Taking advantage of the preoccupation of the wranglers, the arch-fiend strode off with the booty, but being pursued by the indignant parson—who began to exorcise him in Latin—took earth to his place below, carrying the bells with him. The site of his descent *in inferos* is now a pool of boggy (not bogey!) water called Hell Hole, while an adjoining clump of alder trees is known as Hell Carr. Bubbles of marsh gas constantly breaking on the surface of the pool amply confirm the tradition that it forms an entrance to the bottomless pit, and that the bells are still falling, and falling for ever.

Formerly his Satanic Majesty was associated with the 'Devil's Seat', a kind of chair at Yarmouth, formed of part of the skeleton of a whale, and which was said to bring disaster on whoever sat in it. It was afterwards removed into the parish church, where its uncanny influences seems to have been no more felt.

At Langley, another parish bordering the Yare, might be seen the Devil's Round House, which, whenever it was built by day, the Devil overturned at night—a story almost duplicated at Syleham, in the upper part of the Waveney valley, where, while the church was being built on high ground during the day, the Devil carried what was built down to the site in the marshes during the night, where all of us who know Syleham have seen it! There was also at Langley an abbey of some note, and Langley Cross stood, perhaps for centuries, in the village, exposed to rough usage in later times, so that the dwellers in the Hall time and again thought of removing it into the park for protection. There was, however, an ancient prophecy, of quite unknown origin, which declared that upon the same day that the cross was removed there would be a conflagration at the Hall. At length a Lady Beauchamp, setting oracles at defiance, had the cross carefully moved into the park and re-erected. While the villagers witnessed the daring deed, and just as it was completed, a shout of 'Fire' was raised, and the whole gathering rushed off to save the Hall, from a turret of which ugly wreaths of smoke were



curling. Prompt measures put out the fire, and it was satisfactorily proved that no son of the prophet had tried to verify his predictions.

Near Oulton Broad, in the village where George Borrow lived so long, is Oulton High House, built in the middle of the sixteenth century, and long known as the haunted house whence at midnight a Wild Huntsman and his hounds, and a 'White Lady' carrying a poisoned cup, were believed to issue and go their fiendish rounds. The legend is that in the time of George II the lady was the wife of a roystering squire, who, returning unexpectedly from a hunting expedition, surprised her toying with an officer, his guest, whose pity for her had developed into guilty love. High words arose, and when the husband struck his wife's paramour, the latter drove his sword through the unhappy squire's heart. The murderer and the lady fled with her jewels and the gold of the murdered man. Years after, her daughter, who had been forgotten in the haste of departure, having grown up into a beautiful woman, was affianced to a young farmer of the neighbourhood. Being on the eve of marriage, she was sitting with him in the old Hall one bleak November night when a hearse-like carriage, its curtains closely drawn, and with servants dressed in sable livery, stopped at the door. Masked men rushed in and carried off the young girl to her unnatural mother, having stabbed the lover, who had endeavoured in vain to rescue her. In a convent cemetery at Norwich was a grave said to cover the hapless daughter, who had been poisoned by her mother.

A tract of heathland between Lowestoft and Corton is said to have been haunted by a mysterious 'Lady in White', supposed to be an unhappy nun who came to a tragical end. Her 'appearances' there seem to have ceased with the development of the heath as a building estate.

A romantic story attaches to the tower of the church at Caister-by-Sea, a place celebrated for the heroism of its life-boatmen. On the top of the tower is, or was, a central ridge which appears above the parapet, marking, according to old tradition, the place of a tomb wherein a maiden was buried. Her lover, returning from a long voyage, perished by shipwreck off the coast, and the maiden, dying of grief, directed

that her corpse should be entombed on the tower top, under a pyramid raised high enough to serve as a sea-mark. 'Crazy Mary's Hole' was the name given to a cleft in the cliffs south of Lowestoft, in which a demented woman is said to have kept watch for the return of a sailor lover who, long before, had been lost at sea. Sea-encroachment has now practically demolished all traces of the place where she kept her lorn vigil.

If the late Mr. Walter Rye's old skipper, Tungate, is to be credited, the notorious D. D. Home's exploits in levitation were rivalled in the Yare valley some years ago. According to Mr. Rye, Tungate was walking home with his wife from Coldham Hall one moonlight night when they both saw an 'apparently bare-headed waiter, with a white tie and a napkin over his arm, walking parallel with them along the meadows'. They thought nothing of it at first; but when they noticed that the figure 'glided over hedge and ditch with apparent ease without jumping at all', they came to the conclusion that it was something supernatural.

Sayings and rhymes about villages are, as a rule, distinctly uncomplimentary, but Potter Heigham,<sup>1</sup> in the midst of the Broads district, fares well in the local saying:

Blessed are they who live near Potter Heigham,  
Double blessed are they that live in it.

Of a more common type is the following:

Blickling Flats, Aylsham Fliers,  
Marsham Peewits, and Hevingham Liars;

and this, concerning a group of villages between Norwich and Yarmouth:

Halvergate Hares and Reedham Rats,  
Southwood Swine and Cantley Cats,  
Acle Asses and Moulton Mules,  
Beighton Bears and Freethorpe Fools.

Other local characterizations are 'Proud Stalham', 'Sleepy Ingham', 'Silly Sutton', 'Clever Catfield', and 'Raw Hempstead'. Stalham proud because of its central position—'Metropolis of Broadland', as it has been called; Ingham so sleepy from its isolation that an old Ingham man once put

<sup>1</sup> Also see p. 166.

on his Sunday clothes and went off to church on Monday morning. The Sutton people are credited with the habit of thrusting their hands out of the window to feel if it is daylight ; while, on the other hand, if any strange story is agog, the right thing to do is to go to Catfield ' to know the truth of it '. Hempstead, on the bleak eastern shore, is certainly raw enough.

A long chapter might be written concerning local compliments of this kind, but many of them can be appreciated only by natives of the district, while others are unprintable. In some parts of Broadland a stranger may be advised to go to

Beccles for a Puritan,  
Bungay for the poor,  
Halesworth for a drunkard  
And Hilbro'—

But perhaps we have given currency enough to local libels. To ' go to Bungay to get a new bottom ' is an old saying the origin of which is sometimes ascribed to the old town on the Waveney being formerly famous for making leather breeches and at other times to its defunct wherry-repairing industry.

Gorleston was Gorleston ere Yarmouth began,  
And will be Gorleston when Yarmouth be gone,

has the merit of having its first line historically verifiable ; but

Gorleston great one day will be,  
Yarmouth buried in the sea,

takes us into the realms of prophecy. ' Gorleston Kill-Jews ', a local nickname mentioned by Mr. C. G. Chambers,<sup>1</sup> is said to have been earned by the people here being so sharp in business matters that Jews starved among them. ' Lowestoft Pea-bellies ', as a derisive name for men of that town, probably originated in the days when the local fishermen fed largely on dried peas when at sea.

Considering how abundant is the bird-life of Broadland, it is not surprising that strange sayings and beliefs are, or have been, current concerning the significance of encountering

<sup>1</sup> *A Corner of Suffolk*, p. 24.

certain birds. Even the nest-raiding boys of the marshland hamlets believe it to be unlucky to kill wrens and robins or to interfere with their nests. 'If you rob a robin of its eggs you're sure to break your arm' is, says Dr. Emerson, a local rock-staff. Wrens and robins, however, are unlucky only when interfered with; the swift or 'develin'—that strange wild-screaming bird which grows so restless when night approaches—is unlucky to encounter at any time. The cuckoo's appearance has a boding significance only if 'it flies ahead of you down a road' or alights on the roof of your house: then it means a death in your family. Its first call in spring is not necessarily a disconcerting omen, for, according to Mr. Thistleton Dyer, 'In Norfolk it is a widespread superstition that whatever you are doing when you first hear the cuckoo, that you will do most frequently all the year.' That the presence of sea-gulls in the fields denotes the approach of stormy weather was a credited belief until the utilization of fish offal for land-manuring attracted the gulls in all weathers; but the crying of plovers overhead at night is still a pretty sure indication of coming bad weather.

Sir Thomas Browne rarely localizes the folk-lore contained in his *Vulgar Errors*, but his reference to the belief 'that a kingfisher, hanged by the bill, showeth in what quarter the wind is' may be due to information locally acquired. Only a few years ago, and to our own knowledge, the 'unluckiness' of destroying swallows' and martins' nests built in or against the roof of a church was made an excuse to the then Bishop of Norwich for the litter made by the nesting birds.

Sir Thomas Browne's assertion that, in his day, 'If an hare cross the highway, there are few above three-score years that are not perplexed thereat', may have some relation to the earliest mention we have of a folk-belief in this part of the country, which is that of Dion Cassius, who tells us that just before leading her Icenic army into battle against the Romans, Queen Boudicca 'produced a hare from the folds of her robe; using it as a means of divination; and when it ran towards the crowd, which foreshadowed good luck, they all rejoiced and shouted aloud'. That ill-luck attaches to seeing a black cat many Broadlanders assert; but, for all that, all the



black kittens born are not drowned. Nor, in spite of the aversion with which they are viewed by many people, are all species of spider looked upon with equal abhorrence. Indeed, one kind—a small red one—is called the ‘ money-spinner ’, and wherever it appears—on a fruit bush or the brim of the gardener’s hat—it remains there unmolested. Here, however, we have evidence of a change in belief, for in Browne’s day this little spider was known as the ‘ taint ’, and he says of it, ‘ This by country people is accounted a deadly poison unto cows and horses ; who, if they suddenly die, and swell thereon, ascribe their death hereto, and will commonly say, they have licked a taint.’ The common house-spider, however, was believed to possess curative qualities, for when a child was suffering from whooping-cough one of these spiders was sewn up in a small muslin bag and hung over the fireplace. As soon as it died the child began to recover. Another whooping-cough cure is a pill made from hairs cut off the dark brown mark on a donkey’s back called ‘ Balaam’s Smite ’ ; and yet another is dragging the child through the arch made by a bramble that has rooted itself at both ends. The late Rev. M. C. H. Bird, writing of the neighbourhood of East Ruston in the Ant valley, has told us that even at the beginning of the twentieth century field-mice were still being administered to children for this complaint, while snails were prescribed for consumption, and dragon-flies were caught to bite and cure warts. For rheumatism four moles’ feet, tied up in a bag, are worn round the neck ; but must be all fore feet for rheumatism in the arms and all hind feet if the legs are affected.

A predominance of yellow frogs in the marshes denotes fine weather ; but when brown frogs are the more numerous there will soon be rain. Concerning that curious little creature the natterjack, or running toad, there is a saying that ‘ you can quiet a restive horse with the bone of a running toad ’ ; and the breast-bone of this toad is credited with the power of ‘ swimming against the stream ’ when placed in a river. A sure sign of a wet harvest is—the marshmen assured Dr. Emerson—‘ a field-mouse up in the stuff ’. The belief that an adder’s skin will draw thorns is often expressed, but is not confined to Broadland. The old folk-lines :





SNIFE-SHOOTING

Frank S. ...



Bat, bat, come under my bat,  
And I'll give you a slice of bacon,

are often chanted by village children when the 'flittermice' are fluttering through the dusk ; so, too, is the verse :

Bishy, Bishy Barnabee,  
Tell me when my wedding be ;  
If it be to-morrow day,  
Open your wings and fly away.

The reluctance with which the lady-bird beetle (*Coccinella bipunctata*) leaves any object on which it alights possibly had something to do with the origin of these lines, which are usually repeated when a lady-bird has settled on a child's hand. The lines :

Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home,  
Your house is on fire, and your children will burn,

may have had the same origin.

That informative little book *English Folk-lore* contains several local superstitions. One is that 'if a drill go from one end of a field to the other without depositing any seed—an accident which may result from the tubes and coulter clogging with earth—some person connected with the farm will die before the year is out'. Another is that when a boy and girl are to be baptized the boy must come first, otherwise the girl will have a beard. Here, too, we find yet another cure for whooping-cough. The child is placed with its head bent downwards in a hole dug in a meadow. The sod cut in digging the hole is replaced, and the child kept covered until it coughs. This ceremony must take place in the evening, with no one present save the child and its parents, if a cure is to be assured. The belief that dock-leaves are good for nettle-stings surprises no one who has experienced the soothing effect the cool leaf has on the smarting skin ; but to test the curative qualities of a decoction of boiled garlic-mustard (*Alliaria officinalis*) calls for some courage. It is not so simple a cure as that for scalds and burns ; all the sufferer has to do is to repeat the lines :

An angel came from the North,  
And he brought cold and frost ;  
An angel came from the South,  
And he brought heat and fire ;

The angel come from the North  
Put out the fire

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Those

Elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and  
grooves . . . demi-puppets, that  
By moonshine do the green-sour ringlets make,  
Whereof the ewe not bites,

are not much in evidence in the misty marshes ; but their charmed circles, the fairy rings, are often pointed out by children in the pastures. Children, too, will tell you that if you pluck the bright blue flowers of the bird's-eye (Germander speedwell) the birds will come and pick out your eyes. Even their parents believe it to be unlucky to bring a bunch of dodder grass (*Briza media*) into a house ; and their names for some of the familiar riverside, marsh, and field plants may explain why it is that the herbalists who do business in the Broadland towns do not lack customers. Few plants, except the just-mentioned grass and a few known to be poisonous, have a bad reputation ; but, according to Sir Thomas Browne, the dainty little insectivorous sundews to be found growing on the mosses of wet marshes and commons were in his time believed to be responsible for ' sheep rot '.

That a ' green Christmas makes a fat churchyard ' and ' a wet harvest makes a moist loaf ' no rustic will deny ; but whether milkmaids still put two-leaved clovers in their shoes so that they may meet the men they are going to marry is a secret of their own. Certainly they and other girls have not abandoned the custom of throwing apple-peelings over their shoulders to see what initial letters are formed when the peels fall to the floor ; nor do they fail to assure you that toothache is a love-pain. That ' to help one to salt is to help one to sorrow ' is still a common saying, and good luck is said to follow the picking up of a pin or cast horseshoe. To open an umbrella indoors is a sure sign that some one will soon leave the house for ever. And writing of umbrellas reminds one that the lines :

Rain after church  
Rain all the week,  
Little or much,

are often repeated during a wet journey home from church. That for the moon to be 'new' on Saturday and 'full' on Sunday is an unfortunate occurrence seems plain from the saying :

Saturday new and Sunday full  
Never was good and never wool (will be).

Concerning the moon there is an old nonsense rhyme of doubtful local origin. It affirms that

The man in the moon  
Came down too soon  
And asked the way to Norwich ;  
He went to the south,  
And burnt his mouth  
Through eating cold pea-porridge.

To the survival and practice of witchcraft some reference is made in an earlier chapter. Even in comparatively recent years 'wise women' and 'cunning men' have been known in Broadland, and all the fortune-telling practised in the district is not confined to the swarthy gipsies who visit the cottagers under pretence of having hair-combs and reels of cotton for sale. In 1909 the 'evil eye' of an offended woman was, according to the Rev. M. C. H. Bird, of Brunstead, supposed to have afflicted the cattle of the offender, and about the same time a Stalham doctor was assured by an old woman that he 'couldn't du her owd man no good' because 'he had bin over-looked'. The late rector of Brunstead also relates <sup>1</sup> that 'within the past decade I buried a woman who died, as I afterwards heard, with a fiddle-string tied round her middle to ward off evil spirits'. He also stated that 'lucky days' were still observed for sowing seeds, and that 'to dry off a cow, a libation is made to the gods by milking her on to the ground'. Remarkable evidence of surviving superstitious credulity has been given in local police courts within the last two or three years and has clearly shown that in the Broads district, as elsewhere, the charlatan who takes advantage of it has not far to seek for ready victims.

<sup>1</sup> Presidential Address to the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society, 1909.





## APPENDICES

### I

#### RIVER COURSES AND DISTANCES, AREA OF BROADS, ETC.

IT is usually stated in guide-books that Broadland consists of the district which would be contained within a triangle having the coast between Pakefield and Happisburgh for its base and Norwich for its apex ; but though such a triangle would embrace all the principal Broad<sup>s</sup>, it would not include all the Broadland waterways navigable to cruising yachts. To include all these, a line would have to be drawn from Waxham to North Walsham, continued to Aylsham, Norwich, and Bungay, and brought back to the coast at Pakefield.

The principal rivers in this district are the Yare, Bure, and Waveney, which enter the sea by way of Breydon Water, an estuary extending from Yarmouth to the junction of the Yare and Waveney at Burgh Castle. The Bure has two important tributaries : the Thurne, which, flowing from the north-east, joins it near the village of Thurne, about  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles above Acle Bridge ; and the Ant, which, after pursuing a south-easterly course from North Walsham, enters it about 3 miles above the mouth of the Thurne. The Waveney has no naturally navigable tributary, but a wide channel called Oulton Dyke connects Oulton Broad with the river. The Broad is also connected by Lake Lothing with Lowestoft Harbour. A canal, called the New Cut, extending from Herringfleet to Reedham, enables yachts and wherries to sail to and from Norwich and Lowestoft, Beccles and Bungay, without going round by Breydon. The Chet, a small, shallow tributary which enters the Yare at Hardley Cross, is navigable to wherries up to Loddon. Waxham Dyke, a narrow canal entering Horsey Mere on the north side, is navigable to wherries up to Waxham.

There are about fifty Broad<sup>s</sup>, but some of them are inconsiderable pools. Four—Hickling, Rollesby, Ormesby, and

Barton—each have an area of over 200 acres ; eight others—Filby, Fritton Lake, Heigham Sounds, Horsey Mere, Hoveton Great Broad, Oulton, Ranworth, and Wroxham—are each over 100 acres in extent ; and there are five others, each over 50 acres. Fritton Lake, Flixton Decoy, Filby, Ormesby, Rollesby, Barnby, Benacre, and Calthorpe Broad, cannot be reached by water. Excluding Breydon, which is not a Broad but an estuary nearly 1,300 acres in extent, the total acreage of the principal Broad is rather over 3,000 acres.

### THE YARE AND ITS BROADS

The Yare rises near Letton Park, and flows by way of Hardingham, Barford, Bawburgh, Colney, Earlsam, Cringleford, Keswick, Lakenham, and Bracondale to Trowse, adjoining Norwich, where it is joined by the Wensum. It is navigable to all river craft from Norwich downwards to Yarmouth, a distance of about 25 miles. Below Norwich it receives the waters of a small, narrow tributary, the Chet, which is navigable to wherries and small yachts up to Loddon. At Reedham it is connected with the Waveney by the New Cut, a straight canal  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles long. Its only important Broad is Surlingham (where there is now but little open water) and Rockland (66 acres). The entrances to Surlingham are on the south side of the river, about 5 miles below Norwich. Rockland is connected with the river by several dykes, one of which is navigable to wherries which take in and discharge cargoes at Rockland Staithe. The Broad, however, is very shallow and weed-grown, and yachting parties who visit it should do so in small sailing or rowing boats. The fishing on Rockland is free ; on Surlingham it is preserved. Anglers can hire boats at the Yare Hotel, Brundall ; Coldham Hall, Surlingham ; Buckenham Ferry, Cantley Red House, and Reedham Ferry. The following distances are reckoned from Thorpe Second Bridge : Whitlingham Ferry,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile ; Postwick Grove,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Bramerton Wood's End,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Surlingham Ferry,  $4\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Brundall,  $5\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Surlingham Broad, 6 miles ; Coldham Hall,  $6\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Rockland Broad,  $7\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Buckenham Ferry,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Langley Dyke (leading to Langley Abbey ruins),  $10\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Cantley Red House,  $11\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Hardley Cross and the mouth of the Chet,  $13\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Reedham Ferry,  $14\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Reedham village,  $15\frac{1}{4}$

miles ; New Cut,  $15\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Berney Arms,  $19\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Yarmouth Haven Bridge,  $23\frac{1}{2}$  miles. From Hardley Cross to Loddon, up the Chet, is 4 miles.

### THE WAVENEY, FRITTON LAKE, AND OULTON BROAD

The Waveney has its source in a spring at Lopham Gate, in the parish of South Lopham, about 6 miles west-by-north of Diss, and flows by way of Diss, Scole, Hoxne, Syleham, Harleston, Homersfield, and Earsham to Bungay, from which town downwards it is navigable. From Bungay it flows through Ellingham, Shipmeadow, and Geldeston to Beccles, receiving on its way the waters of a very small, unnavigable tributary called Broome Beck, which has its source in a small lake in Ditchingham Park. Below Beccles its course is through marshlands to Aldeby Railway Bridge and Burgh St. Peter. A short distance below the church of the last-named hamlet is Oulton Dyke, a wide channel branching off to the right, leading to Oulton Broad, which is connected with Lowestoft Harbour by a tidal channel known as Lake Lothing. Marshlands border the river from Oulton Dyke to Somerleyton, and on the left to Herringfleet, where, near St. Olave's Bridge, is the entrance to the New Cut, connecting the Waveney with the Yare at Reedham. St. Olave's Bridge is the last which spans the river, which, after flowing through a further stretch of marshes, enters Breydon at Burgh Castle, close beside the mouth of the Yare. Oulton Broad (132 acres) is the only Broad accessible from the river. Barnby Broad (11 acres) and Flixton Decoy (22 acres) are private waters without navigable channels leading to them. Nor is there a navigable channel leading to Fritton Lake (163 acres), which should be visited from St. Olave's, from which it is distant about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. A charge of threepence is made for admission to the Old Hall Gardens which border the lake. Rowing boats can then be hired for a cruise on the lake. There is free fishing on Oulton Broad except during the close season, and on Fritton Lake from April to September. The following distances are reckoned from Yarmouth Haven Bridge : Burgh Castle,  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; St. Olave's Bridge,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; entrance to the New Cut,  $9\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Somerleyton Bridge,  $12\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Oulton Dyke, 15 miles ; (Oulton Broad,  $16\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Mutford Bridge Lock,  $17\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Lowestoft Harbour, 19 miles ;) Worlingham

Staithe, 20 miles ; Aldeby Staithe,  $20\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Sayer's Grove 22 miles ; Beccles Bridge, 23 miles ; Dawson's Dip House  $24\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Geldeston Lock, 27 miles ; Ellingham Lock, 30 miles, Wainford Lock, 32 miles ; Bungay Staithe, 33 miles.

### THE BURE AND ITS BROADS

The Bure has its source in the neighbourhood of Melton Constable, and pursues a south-easterly course to the sea, which it enters by way of Breydon, into which it flows not far above Yarmouth Haven Bridge. It is navigable from Aylsham downwards, but between that town and Wroxham Bridge there are three locks and several bridges. The scenery of its upper waters is very charming, and Coltishall, about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles above Wroxham Bridge, is the most picturesque waterside village in Broadland. Below Coltishall there are no locks, and the river is fairly wide. The distance by river from Yarmouth to Aylsham is about 44 miles. The Bure is considered to be the chief Broadland waterway, because there are a greater number of Broads connected with it than with any other river in the district. The principal Bure Broads, taken in the order in which they are met with during a voyage from Yarmouth to Aylsham, are : South Walsham, 57 acres ; Ranworth, about 150 acres ; Hoveton Little Broad, 80 acres ; Woodbastwick, 64 acres ; Salhouse, 33 acres ; Salhouse Little Broad ; Hoveton Great Broad, 120 acres ; Wroxham 102 acres ; Wroxham Bridge Broad, 14 acres ; and Belaugh, 12 acres. In addition to these there are several smaller Broads or pools connected with the river or the larger Broads. Most of these are private waters, as are Woodbastwick, Hoveton Great and Little Broads, Belaugh, and part of Ranworth. At Wroxham, Salhouse, Salhouse Little, Ranworth, and South Walsham Broads the fishing and shooting are preserved. On Wroxham a charge of 2s. 6d. a day is made. The entrances to all the Bure Broads which can be visited without special permission are between St. Benet's Abbey and Wroxham Bridge.

Two important tributaries, the Thurne and the Ant, enter the Bure within three miles of each other between Acle and Horning. A three-mile dyke called the Muck Fleet connects Rollesby, Filby, and Ormesby Broads with the Bure, but is quite unnavigable.

The following distances are reckoned from Yarmouth :





LAYING AT WIGEON

Frank S. S. S.



Three Mile House,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Runham Swim or Ferry,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Six Mile House,  $6\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Stokesby Ferry,  $9\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Acle Bridge, 12 miles ; Thurne Mouth,  $15\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; St. Benet's Abbey and, opposite, Fleet Dyke, leading to South Walsham Broad,  $17\frac{3}{4}$  miles ; Ant Mouth, 18 miles ; Ranworth Dyke, leading to Ranworth Broad,  $19\frac{1}{4}$  miles ; Horning Church, 20 miles ; Horning Ferry, 21 miles ; Horning village,  $21\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; entrance to Salhouse Broad,  $24\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; entrance to Salhouse Little Broad, 25 miles ; entrance to Wroxham Broad,  $25\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Wroxham Bridge, 27 miles ; Belaugh, 31 miles ; Coltishall,  $33\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Little Hautbois Bridge, 36 miles ; Lammas Lock, 38 miles ; Oxnead,  $40\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; Burgh-next-Aylsham, 42 miles ; Aylsham  $44\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

### THE ANT AND ITS BROADS

This river, which is navigable as far up its twenty-miles' course as North Walsham, has its source in Antingham Ponds, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from that town. Until the railway came, the wherries carried on a considerable trade with North Walsham, and it is on their account that the river is kept fairly clear of water-weeds and other obstacles to navigation ; but in spite of this it is difficult for a yacht drawing much water to make very rapid progress above Wayford Bridge. The only important Broad connected with the Ant is Barton (270 acres), a fine sheet of water, but very shallow except in the post-marked channels. The entrance to this Broad is about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the river mouth and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles above Ludham Bridge. Sutton Broad, which adjoins a dyke leading from the Ant to Stalham, has little open water and is chiefly a wilderness of sedge, reeds, and rushes. Yachts seldom attempt to go beyond Barton Broad, except to reach Stalham by way of Stalham Dyke. The following distances are reckoned from Ant Mouth, where the river enters the Bure : Ludham Bridge, about 1 mile ; Irstead Church, 4 miles ; entrance to Barton Broad,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles ; entrance to Stalham Dyke, 6 miles ; Stalham Staithe,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles. A little way up Stalham Dyke the channel divides, the left arm being that which leads to North Walsham. Up this channel, which is the continuation of the Ant, it is about 2 miles to Wayford Bridge, 5 miles to Briggate Lock, 8 miles to North Walsham Flour Mill, and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the source of the river.

## THE THURNE AND ITS BROADS

The Thurne or Hundred Stream may be said to have its source in the vast network of dykes in the marshlands between Eccles and Winterton; but the greater part of the water which discharges into the Bure is drawn from Hickling Broad, Heigham Sounds, and Horsey Mere. It is navigable as far up its course as Martham or Somerton Broad (73 acres). Horsey Mere (126 acres), is connected with Heigham Sounds (126 acres) by a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles' navigable channel called the Old Meadow Dyke, and Hickling Broad (464 acres) is connected with the Sounds by Whiteslea (15 acres), the waters of these four Broad and the last-mentioned three of which may almost be said to form one sheet of water, finding their way into the Thurne by way of a navigable channel called Kendal (locally 'Candle') Dyke. On the north side of Horsey Mere is the entrance to Waxham Dyke or the New Cut, which, when it is cleared out, is navigable for wherries and small yachts as far as Waxham, a village on the sea-coast. Potter Heigham, where there are two good inns, is a convenient centre from which the chief Broad in this district can be visited. The fishing and shooting on Hickling, Horsey, and Heigham Sounds are preserved; but permission to fish the Sounds—an excellent place for rudd—can be obtained from George Applegate, Potter Heigham. The following distances are reckoned from Thurne Mouth where the river enters the Bure: Entrance to Womack Dyke  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles; Potter Heigham Bridge,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  miles; entrance to Kendal Dyke,  $4\frac{1}{4}$  miles; Martham Broad,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles; Hickling Staithe, 7 miles; Horsey Mere,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

## ORMESBY, FILBY, AND ROLLESBY BROADS

These three Broad, which may be said to form one sheet of water nearly 600 acres in area, lie almost due north of Runham Ferry on the Bure, from which they are distant about three miles. They are connected with the Bure by a three-mile dyke called the Muck Fleet, but this dyke is not navigable. Great Ormesby station, on the Midland and Great Northern Joint Line, is about two miles from the Eel's Foot and Sportsman's Arms, two inns where boats for rowing or fishing on the

Broads can be hired. There is a regular daily motor-bus service from Norwich and Yarmouth through the neighbourhood of these Broads, and motor-coach trips to them are made from Yarmouth and Lowestoft during the summer holiday season. Rollesby is the largest of the three Broads, its area being about 240 acres ; Ormesby is 207 acres in area, and Filby 136 acres. Narrow channels spanned by low-arched bridges connect the three Broads ; but these channels are very shallow, and it is often difficult to get even a small rowing boat under the bridges. Except in these channels the water is deep. The fishing is free almost everywhere on the Broads to visitors who hire boats at the inns.



## II

# A LIST OF THE BIRDS, MAMMALS, REPTILES, AMPHIBIANS, AND FISHES OF BROADLAND

## BIRDS

BY EMMA L. TURNER, F.L.S.

IN compiling the following list of Broadland birds I have had placed at my disposal all the most recent information collected by Mr. B. B. Rivière and published by him in his *History of the Birds of Norfolk*. The area included is the one originally marked out by Mr. Dutt: 'A line drawn from Palling to North Walsham, continued to Aylsham, Norwich, and Bungay, and returning to the coast at Pakefield, combined with the seaboard between Palling and Pakefield.' The terms I have used and the general arrangement are necessarily artificial when dealing with a limited area. Birds which are only passage migrants or winter visitors to the Broadland may be residents or summer visitors in other parts of Norfolk. The terns, for instance (with the exception of the little tern which breeds in the Broads' area) are classed as *passage migrants* although they breed farther along the Norfolk coast; while the gadwall, which is resident in West Norfolk, occurs only in Broadland as a *winter visitor*. The term *resident* is used for such species as are present throughout the year, although there may be, and in most instances there probably is, a change of individuals at the different seasons.

Raven (*Corvus corax corax* L.).—Ceased to breed about middle of past century. No recent record of occurrence.

Hooded Crow (*Corvus cornix cornix* L.).—Winter visitor.

Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone corone* L.).—Resident.

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus frugilegus* L.).—Resident.

Jackdaw (*Coloeus monedula spermologus* Vieill.).—Resident.

Magpie (*Pica pica pica* L.).—Scarce resident.

- Slender-billed Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes macro-rhynchus* Br.).—Rare vagrant.
- Continental Jay (*Garrulus glandarius glandarius* L.).—Winter visitor.
- British Jay (*Garrulus glandarius rufitergum* Hart.).—Resident.
- Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris* L.).—Resident.
- Rose-coloured Starling (*Pastor roseus* L.).—Vagrant.
- Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus oriolus* L.).—Vagrant.
- Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes* L.).—Resident.
- Greenfinch (*Chloris chloris chloris* L.).—Resident.
- British Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis britannica* Hart.).—Resident.
- Siskin (*Carduelis spinus* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Twite (*Carduelis flavirostris flavirostris* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Mealy Redpoll (*Carduelis linaria linaria* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Lesser Redpoll (*Carduelis linaria cabaret* P. L. S. Müll.).—Resident.
- Coues's Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni exilipes* Coues).—Rare vagrant ; one Yarmouth, October 26th 1910.
- Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina cannabina* L.).—Summer visitor and passage migrant.
- Serin (*Serinus canarius serinus* L.).—Vagrant.
- Northern Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula* L.).—Rare vagrant ; one Yarmouth, January 22nd 1893.
- British Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula nesa* Math. and Ired.).—Resident.
- Common Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra curvirostra* L.).—Irregular visitor. Breeds in Norfolk.
- Two-Barred Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera bifasciata* Brehm).—Rare vagrant ; one Burgh, September 1st 1889.
- Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs coelebs* L.).—Resident.
- Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla* L.).—Winter visitor.
- House-Sparrow (*Passer domesticus domesticus* L.).—Resident.
- Tree-Sparrow (*Passer montanus montanus* L.).—Resident.
- Corn-Bunting (*Emberiza calandra calandra* L.).—Resident.
- Yellow Bunting.—(*Emberiza citrinella citrinella* L.).—Resident.
- Cirl Bunting (*Emberiza cirlus* L.).—Vagrant.
- Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana* L.).—Rare passage migrant.
- Reed-bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus schoeniclus* L.).—Resident.
- Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius lapponicus lapponicus* L.).—Winter visitor.

Snow-Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis* L.).—Winter visitor.

Wood-Lark (*Lullula arborea arborea* L.).—Occasional winter visitor. Breeds Norfolk.

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis arvensis* L.).—Resident.

Shore-Lark (*Eremophila alpestris flava* Gm.).—Winter visitor.

Richard's Pipit (*Anthus richardi richardi* Vieill.).—Rare passage migrant.

Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris campestris* L.).—Rare vagrant.

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis trivialis* L.).—Summer visitor.

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis* L.).—Resident.

Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta spinoletta* L.).—Rare passage migrant.

Rock Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta petrosus* Mont.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Scandinavian Rock Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta littoralis* Brehm).—Rare passage migrant.

Blue-headed Wagtail (*Motacilla flava flava* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.

Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava rayi* Bp.).—Summer visitor.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea cinerea* Tunst.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant.

Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba yarrellii* Gould).—Resident.

White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba alba* L.).—Passage migrant.

British Tree-Creeper (*Certhia familiaris britannica* Ridgw.).—Resident.

Wall-Creeper (*Tichodroma muraria* L.).—Rare vagrant; one Stratton Strawless, October 30th 1792.

British Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea affinis* Blyth).—Resident.

Continental Great Titmouse (*Parus major major* L.).—Passage migrant and probable winter visitor.

British Great Titmouse (*Parus major newtoni* Prazak).—Resident.

British Blue Titmouse (*Parus caeruleus obscurus* Prazak).—Resident.

British Coal Titmouse (*Parus ater britannicus* Sharpe and Dress.).—Resident.

British Marsh Titmouse (*Parus palustris dresseri* Stejn.).—Resident.

British Long-Tailed Titmouse (*Aegithalos caudatus roseus* Blyth).—Resident.

Continental Golden-crested Wren (*Regulus regulus regulus* L.).—Passage migrant.

- British Golden-crested Wren (*Regulus regulus anglicorum* Hart.)  
—Resident.
- Fire-crested Wren (*Regulus ignicapillus ignicapillus* Temm.).—  
Rare winter visitor.
- Bearded Titmouse (*Panarus biarmicus biarmicus* L.).—Resi-  
dent.
- Lesser Grey Shrike (*Lanius minor* Gm.).—Rare vagrant.
- Great Grey Shrike (*Lanius excubitor excubitor* L.).—Occa-  
sional winter visitor.
- Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator senator* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio collurio* L.).—Summer  
visitor.
- Waxwing (*Bombusilla garrulus* L.).—Irregular winter visitor.
- Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata striata* Pall.).—Summer  
visitor.
- Pied Flycatcher (*Muscicapa hypoleuca hypoleuca* Pall.).—  
Passage migrant.
- Red-breasted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa parva parva* Bechst.).—  
Rare passage migrant.
- Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita collybita* Vieill.).—Summer  
visitor.
- Willow-Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus* L.).—Summer  
visitor.
- Wood-Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix sibilatrix* Bechst.).—  
Scarce summer visitor.
- Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus humei praeemium* Math.  
and Ired.).—Rare passage migrant.
- Savi's Warbler (*Locustella luscinioides luscinioides* Savi.).—  
Formerly bred. Now extinct.
- Grasshopper-Warbler (*Locustella naevia naevia* Bodd.).—Sum-  
mer visitor.
- Great Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus arundinaceus*  
L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Reed-Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus* Herm.).—  
Summer visitor.
- Marsh-Warbler (*Acrocephalus palustris* Bechst.).—Suspected,  
not proved, as a summer visitor.
- Sedge-Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* L.).—Summer  
visitor.
- Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin* Bodd.).—Summer visitor.
- Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis communis* Lath.).—Summer  
visitor.

- Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca curruca* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata dartfordiensis* Lath.).—Rare vagrant. Breeds Suffolk.
- White's Thrush (*Turdus dauma aureus* Hol.).—Rare vagrant ; one Hickling, October 10th 1871.
- Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Mistle-Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus viscivorus* L.).—Resident.
- Continental Song-Thrush (*Turdus philomelus philomelus* Brehm).—Passage migrant and possibly winter resident.
- British Song-Thrush (*Turdus philomelus clarkei* Hart.).—Resident.
- Redwing (*Turdus musicus* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Ring-Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus torquatus* L.).—Passage migrant.
- Blackbird (*Turdus merula merula* L.).—Resident.
- Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe* L.).—Summer visitor ; also passage migrant.
- Greenland Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa* Gm.).—Passage migrant.
- Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra rubetra* L.).—Summer visitor and passage migrant.
- British Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata hibernans* Hart.).—Resident.
- Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus* L.).—Passage migrant. Breeds Norfolk.
- Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis* Gm.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhyncha megarhyncha* Brehm).—Summer visitor.
- Norwegian Bluethroat (*Luscinia svecica gaetkei* Kleinschm.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Continental Robin (*Erithacus rubecula rubecula* L.).—Passage migrant.
- British Robin (*Erithacus rubecula melophilus* Hart.).—Resident.
- Alpine Accentor (*Prunella collaris collaris* Scop.).—Rare vagrant.
- British Hedge-Sparrow (*Prunella modularis occidentalis* Hart.).—Resident.
- Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes troglodytes* L.).—Resident.
- Black-bellied Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus cinclus* L.).—Vagrant.
- Swallow (*Hirundo rustica rustica* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Martin (*Delichon urbica urbica* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Sand-Martin (*Riparia riparia riparia* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Alpine Swift (*Apus melba melba* L.).—Rare vagrant.



- Swift (*Apus apus apus* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus europaeus* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Bee-Eater (*Meops apiaster* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Hoopoe (*Upupa epops epops* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Roller (*Coracias garrulus garrulus* L.).—Vagrant.
- Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis ispida* L.).—Resident.
- Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis virescens* Brehm).—Resident.
- Northern Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates major major* L.).—Scarce winter visitor.
- British Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates major anglicus* Hart.).—Resident.
- British Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates minor comminutus* Hart.).—Resident.
- Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla torquilla* L.).—Passage migrant. Breeds Norfolk.
- Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus canorus* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Great Spotted Cuckoo (*Clamator glandarius* L.).—Rare vagrant ; one Yarmouth, October 18th 1896.
- Snowy Owl (*Nyctea nyctea* L.).—Vagrant.
- Tengmalm's Owl (*Aegolius funereus funereus* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Little Owl (*Athene noctua vidalii* A. E. Brehm).—Resident.
- Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus otus* L.).—Resident.
- Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus flammeus* Pontopp.).—Resident and winter visitor.
- Scops Owl (*Otus scops scops* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- British Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco sylvatica* Shaw).—Resident.
- White-breasted Barn-Owl (*Tyto alba alba* Scop.).—Resident.
- Dark-breasted Barn-Owl (*Tyto alba guttata* Brehm).—Vagrant.
- Iceland Falcon (*Falco rusticolus islandus* Brünn).—Rare vagrant.
- Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus peregrinus* Tunst.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Hobby (*Falco subbuteo subbuteo* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Merlin (*Falco columbarius aesalon* Tunst.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus* L.).—Resident.
- Red-footed Falcon (*Falco vespertinus vespertinus* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo lagopus lagopus* Brünn.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant.

- Common Buzzard (*Buteo buteo buteo* L.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant.
- Marsh-Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Hen-Harrier (*Circus cyaneus cyaneus* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis gentilis* L.).—Vagrant.
- Sparrow-Hawk (*Accipiter nisus nisus* L.).—Resident.
- Kite (*Milvus milvus milvus* L.).—Formerly resident. No recent record of occurrence.
- White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla* L.).—Vagrant.
- Honey-Buzzard (*Pernis apivorus apivorus* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus haliaetus* L.).—Occasional passage migrant.
- White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia ciconia* L.).—Vagrant.
- Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia leucorodia* L.).—Passage migrant. Formerly bred.
- Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus falcinellus* L.).—Occasional passage migrant.
- Common Heron (*Ardea cinerea cinerea* L.).—Resident.
- Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea purpurea* L.).—Vagrant.
- Buff-backed Heron (*Ardeola ibis ibis* L.).—Rare vagrant ; one Breydon Marshes, October 23rd 1917.
- Squacco Heron (*Ardeola ralloides* Scop.).—Rare vagrant.
- Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax* L.).—Vagrant.
- Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus minutus* L.).—Vagrant, chiefly spring.
- Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris stellaris* L.).—Resident.
- Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus bewickii bewickii* Yarr.).—Winter visitor.
- Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor* Gm.).—Resident.
- Grey Lag-Goose (*Anser anser* L.).—Scarce winter visitor.
- White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons* Scop.).—Winter visitor.
- Bean-Goose (*Anser fabalis fabalis* Lath.).—Winter visitor.
- Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus* Baillon).—Winter visitor.
- Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis* Pall.).—Rare vagrant ; one Yarmouth 1805.
- Barnacle-Goose (*Branta leucopsis* Bechst.).—Scarce winter visitor.

- Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Sheld-duck (*Tadorna tadorna* L.).—Resident.
- Ruddy Sheld-duck (*Casarca ferruginea* Pall.).—Vagrant.
- Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* L.).—Resident.
- Gadwall (*Anas strepera* L.).—Winter visitor. Breeds Norfolk.
- Teal (*Anas crecca crecca* L.).—Resident.
- Garganey (*Anas querquedula* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Widgeon (*Anas penelope* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Pintail (*Anas acuta acuta* L.).—Winter visitor. Has bred Norfolk.
- Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata* L.).—Resident.
- Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina* Pall.).—Vagrant.
- Common Pochard (*Nyroca ferina ferina* L.).—Winter visitor. Has bred.
- Ferruginous Duck (*Nyroca nyroca nyroca* Güld.).—Vagrant.
- Tufted Duck (*Nyroca fuligula* L.).—Winter visitor. Has bred.
- Scaup-Duck (*Nyroca marila marila* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Golden-eye (*Bucephala clangula clangula* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Buffel-headed Duck (*Bucephala albeola* L.).—Rare vagrant ; one Yarmouth 1830.
- Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Steller's Eider (*Polysticta stelleri* Pall.).—Rare vagrant ; one Caister, February 9th 1830.
- Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima mollissima* L.).—Scarce winter visitor.
- Common Scoter (*Oidemia nigra nigra* L.).—Winter visitor, mostly at sea.
- Velvet-Scoter (*Oidemia fusca fusca* L.).—Winter visitor off coast.
- Surf-Scoter (*Oidemia perspicillata* L.).—Rare vagrant at sea.
- Goosander (*Mergus merganser merganser* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Smew (*Mergus albellus* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo carbo* L.).—Irregular visitor, chiefly off coast. Bred Norfolk 1914 and 1916.
- Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis aristotelis* L.).—Irregular visitor, chiefly off coast.
- Gannet (*Sula bassana* L.).—Frequently seen off coast, chiefly in autumn.
- Storm-Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus* L.).—Irregular winter visitor off coast, chiefly autumn.
- Leach's Fork-tailed Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa leucorhoa* Vieill.).—Occurs occasionally off coast.

- Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus puffinus* Brünn.).—Irregular visitor off coast, chiefly autumn.
- Madeiran Little Shearwater (*Puffinus assimilis baroli* Bp.).—Rare vagrant ; one Earsham, April 10th 1858.
- Great Shearwater (*Puffinus gravis* O'Reilly).—Rare vagrant.
- Fulmar Petrel (*Fulmarus glacialis glacialis* L.).—Occurs occasionally off coast, mostly autumn.
- Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus cristatus* L.).—Summer visitor ; occasional winter visitor.
- Slavonian Grebe (*Podiceps auritus* L.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps griseiginea griseiginea* Bodd.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Black-necked Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis* Brehm).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Little Grebe (*Podiceps ruficollis ruficollis* Pall.).—Resident.
- Great Northern Diver (*Colymbus immer immer* Brünn.).—Winter visitor.
- Black-throated Diver (*Colymbus arcticus arcticus* L.).—Winter visitor.
- Red-throated Diver (*Colymbus stellatus* Pontopp.).—Winter visitor.
- Wood-Pigeon (*Columba palumbus palumbus* L.).—Resident.
- Stock-Dove (*Columba oenas* L.).—Resident.
- Rock-Dove (*Columba livia livia* Gm.).—Rare vagrant ; one Ludham, December 9th 1925.
- Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia turtur turtur* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Pallas's Sand-Grouse (*Syrhaptes paradoxus* Pall.).—Irregular visitor at long intervals. Two principal irruptions 1863, 1888.
- Stone-Curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus oedicnemus* L.).—Summer visitor.
- Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola pratincola* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Oyster-Catcher (*Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus* L.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor. Breeds Norfolk.
- Dotterel (*Charadrius morinellus* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Caspian Plover (*Charadrius asiaticus asiaticus* Pall.).—Rare vagrant ; one Yarmouth, May 22nd 1890.
- Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula hiaticula* L.).—Resident.
- Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Golden Plover (*Charadrius apricarius* L.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant.

- Grey Plover (*Squatarola squatarola squatarola* L.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant.
- Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus* L.).—Resident.
- Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres interpres* L.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax* L.).—Passage migrant. Formerly bred ; last nest 1907.
- Sanderling (*Crocethia alba* Pall.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Knot (*Calidrus canutus canutus* L.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Southern Dunlin (*Calidris alpina schinzii* Brehm).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Lapland Dunlin (*Calidris alpina alpina* L.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Curlew-Sandpiper (*Calidris testacea* Pall.).—Passage migrant.
- Little Stint (*Calidris minuta* Leisl.).—Passage migrant.
- Temminck's Stint (*Calidris temminckii* Leisl.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- American Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris maculata* Vieill.).—Rare vagrant.
- Siberian Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata* Horsf.).—Rare vagrant.
- Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima maritima* Brünn.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis* Vieill.).—Rare vagrant.
- Broad-Billed Sandpiper (*Limicola falcinellus falcinellus* Pont.).—Rare vagrant.
- Red-breasted Sandpiper (*Limnodromus griseus griseus* Gm.).—Rare vagrant.
- Common Sandpiper (*Tringa hypoleucos* L.).—Passage migrant. Has bred in Norfolk.
- Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola* L.).—Passage migrant.
- Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus* L.).—Passage migrant.
- Iceland Redshank (*Tringa totanus robusta* Schiöler).—Probably winter visitor.
- Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus totanus* L.).—Resident.
- Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus* Pall.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia* Gunn.).—Passage migrant.
- Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius* L.).—Irregular passage migrant.



- Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus himantopus* L.).—Rare vagrant.
- Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta* L.).—Passage migrant. Formerly bred.
- Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica lapponica* L.).—Passage migrant and winter visitor.
- Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa limosa* L.).—Scarce passage migrant. Formerly bred.
- Common Curlew (*Numenius arquata arquata* L.).—Winter visitor and passage migrant. Breeds Norfolk.
- Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus* L.).—Passage migrant.
- Great Snipe (*Capella media* Lath.).—Scarce passage migrant.
- Common Snipe (*Capella gallinago gallinago* L.).—Resident.
- Jack Snipe (*Iymnocryptes minimus* Brünn.).—Winter visitor.
- Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola rusticola* L.).—Winter visitor. Occasionally breeds in Broadland.
- Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger niger* L.).—Passage migrant. Formerly bred.
- Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias leucopareius leucopareius* Temm.).—Rare vagrant.
- White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus* Temm.).—Rare vagrant.
- Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica nilotica* Gm.).—Rare vagrant.
- Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia* Pall.).—Rare vagrant.
- Sandwich Tern (*Sterna sandvicensis sandvicensis* Lath.).—Passage migrant to Broadland ; breeds in Norfolk.
- Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii dougallii* Mont.).—Scarce passage migrant to Broadland ; breeds in Norfolk.
- Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo hirundo* L.).—Passage migrant to Broadland ; breeds in Norfolk.
- Arctic Tern (*Sterna macrura* Naumann).—Scarce passage migrant to Broadland ; breeds in Norfolk.
- Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons albifrons* Pall.).—Summer visitor and passage migrant.
- Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini* Sabine).—Scarce visitor, chiefly autumn.
- Little Gull (*Larus minutus* Pall.).—Irregular winter visitor and passage migrant.
- Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus ridibundus* L.).—Resident.
- Mediterranean Black-headed Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*

Temm.).—Rare vagrant ; one Breydon, December 26th 1886.

Common Gull (*Larus canus canus* L.).—Winter visitor, occasional other seasons, chiefly immature.

Herring-Gull (*Larus argentatus argentatus* Pont.).—Winter visitor, occasional other seasons, chiefly immature.

Yellow-legged Herring-Gull (*Larus argentatus cachinnans* Pall.).—Rare vagrant ; one Breydon, November 4th 1886.

Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus fuscus* L.).—Scarce passage migrant.

British Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus affinis* Reinh.).—Passage migrant.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus* L.).—Winter visitor, occasional other seasons.

Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus* Gunn.).—Irregular winter visitor.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides* Meyer).—Rare winter visitor.

Kittiwake Gull (*Rissa tridactyla tridactyla* L.).—Winter visitor, chiefly at sea.

Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua skua* Brünn.).—Scarce passage migrant, autumn.

Pomatorhine Skua (*Stercorarius pomarinus* Temm.).—Irregular passage migrant, autumn..

Arctic Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus* L.).—Passage migrant, autumn.

Long-tailed Skua (*Stercorarius longicaudus* Vieill.).—Scarce passage migrant, autumn.

Razorbill (*Alca torda* L.).—Occurs on coast, chiefly winter.

Northern Guillemot (*Uria aalge aalge* Pont.).—Occurs on coast, chiefly winter.

Southern Guillemot (*Uria aalge albionis* With.).—Occurs on coast, chiefly winter.

Black Guillemot (*Uria grylle grylle* L.).—Rare winter visitor.

Little Auk (*Alle alle* L.).—Irregular winter visitor, sometimes in considerable numbers.

Southern Puffin (*Fratercula arctica grabae* Brehm).—Irregular visitor off coast.

Great Bustard (*Otis tarda tarda* L.).—One seen at Horsey, January 7th 1867. Formerly bred Norfolk.

Eastern Little Bustard (*Otis tetrax orientalis* Hart.).—Vagrant.

Common Crane (*Megalornis grus grus* L.).—Vagrant. Possibly bred formerly.

Land-rail (*Crex crex* L.).—Passage migrant. Formerly bred.

- Spotted Crake (*Porzana porzana* L.).—Passage migrant. Has bred formerly in some numbers.
- Little Crake (*Porzana parva* Scop.).—Rare vagrant.
- Baillon's Crake (*Porzana pusilla intermedia* Herm.).—Rare vagrant. Has bred twice.
- Water-rail (*Rallus aquaticus aquaticus* L.).—Resident.
- Moor-hen (*Gallinula chloropus chloropus* L.).—Resident.
- Coot (*Fulica atra atra* L.).—Resident.
- Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus* L.).—Resident.
- Common Partridge (*Perdix perdix perdix* L.).—Resident.
- Quail (*Coturnix coturnix coturnix* L.).—Irregular summer visitor and passage migrant.
- Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa rufa* L.).—Resident.

## MAMMALS

The Otter.—Although seldom seen by summer visitors, and believed to be decreasing in numbers, otters are not uncommon in Broadland; every year I hear of their being met with in the neighbourhood of the more isolated Broad and river reaches. The 'orter', as the Broadsmen call it, is, as Dr. Emerson asserts, the 'largest and fiercest wild animal' of the district. Calver, the old water bailiff of the Waveney and Oulton Fisheries Protection Society, in the course of his life shot or trapped about a dozen otters, the largest weighing 27½ lbs. They are, he says, 'wasteful feeders', often biting only one mouthful out of a bream they have seized, and then leaving it dead on the river bank. When trapped they are often difficult to kill by blows, but will feign death until released from the trap, and then sometimes escape. Shallow Broad like Rockland and Barton are their favourite haunts; there they fish nightly. They have been known to take eels off the hooks on eel-lines. Their nests or lairs are variously placed, in alder carrs, among tree roots, or on the hovers by the river-side. Usually there is a hole in the hover near the nest, through which the otters dive if disturbed. Formerly they were frequently found drowned in the bow-nets used for taking pike. Marshmen and Broadsmen seldom allow such 'warmint' to escape if they can help it, being glad to earn the few shillings a dead otter is valued at by the taxidermist.

The Polecat is rare, though occasionally encountered in the



Frank Southgate

RISEING MISTS, COLTISHALL





neighbourhood of rabbit warrens. The Stoat, locally known as the 'lobster' or 'minifa', is fairly common. It is found not only in game coverts and warrens, but on the marshlands, and may sometimes be seen in the dykes, which it visits for the purpose of getting at the eggs and young of water hens. It is abundant near the coast warrens of Waxham and Horsey. The Weasel, locally the 'mouse-hunter', often makes its nest in holes in the river walls. It is less ready than the stoat to enter water, but does so occasionally in pursuit of young rats and voles. Mice are its favourite prey, for which it often resorts to corn-stacks. On the marshes it finds voles. Lubbock says that 'mice and voles compose great part of its diet. Even in spring, when partridges and pheasants are young, in all instances in which I have seen a weasel with prey in its mouth, the booty has turned out to be a mouse. The contrary is generally the case with the stoat, the ravages of which amongst game are very great.' The gamekeepers, however, affirm that weasels not only attack young game birds, but young rabbits and leverets. Paget states that the Martin formerly occurred at Herringfleet; and on the same authority we learn that the Badger used to frequent the neighbourhood of the upper Ant.

Rabbits are plentiful in the district, but seldom seen on the marshes, though they sometimes make burrows in loose-soiled river walls near the 'hangers' which slope down from the uplands to the marshes. Hares, on the contrary, are as fond of the damp ronds and water-meadows as of the upland fields, and strollers along the walls often disturb them from their forms among the rushes and sedges. Coursing-matches frequently take place on some of the marshes. In the neighbourhood of Cantley the marshmen are never tired of talking about a famous match in which the hare, after running a circular course of four and a half miles, was headed off by a boy and went over the whole ground again. It then dropped exhausted, as did the dogs, the foremost of which was only a few yards from the hare, but had not the strength to reach it. Squirrels are found in most of the copses and plantations near the Broadlands and on the borders of the marshes. I have known one to visit a clump of riverside willows, to reach which it must have made a mile-and-a-half journey across the marshes.

Hedgehogs occur frequently on the uplands and in the coverts on the borders of the marshes.

Moles are very abundant on the marshes, even on those

subject to frequent floods ; being able to swim as well as water rats, they easily escape to dry ground when their runs are invaded by water. Not infrequently they are seen swimming across the dykes ; on a stormy June day I saw one crossing the Waveney a little way above Geldeston Lock. Lubbock refers to cream-coloured moles having been found in a certain marsh : these are not uncommon in some localities. Albino are of frequent occurrence.

Brown Rats are too plentiful about many of the marshland hamlets and farmsteads, as well as around the Broadlands and the river banks. According to Dr. Emerson, the farmstead rats are easily distinguished from the waterside rats, the former being rabbit-coloured with a yellow chest, the latter brown verging on red. A third variety, a small reddish rat, is also mentioned by marshmen, who call it the ' ship's rat ', believing that it was imported by ships. The waterside rats can always be seen by Broadland cruisers, who, besides observing their holes in the river banks, can even trace their overland run along the dykesides. The Black Rat (*Mus rattus*), which the brown rat has almost exterminated, or at least supplanted, survives in Yarmouth, where it is not uncommon in some of the houses in the ' rows '. From the same town Mr. A. Patterson records the Alexandrine Rat (*Mus alexandrinus*), a variety of *Mus rattus* undoubtedly introduced by some ship from the Mediterranean : it has also occurred in Norwich. Among the Mice of the district the Harvest Mouse (*Mus minutus*), a species of local distribution in this country, seems to be the least common. The Long-tailed Field Mouse (*Mus silvaticus*) is generally distributed over the district. Mr. Trevor-Battye asserts that in the dry summer of 1893 the black-headed gulls breeding at Scoulton frequently brought mice, which were probably of this species, to their nests, and killed them by dropping them from a height. I am not aware that the gulls breeding in Broadland have been observed to do this ; but the kestrels, stoats, and weasels which frequent the marshes feed chiefly on mice. The Common Mouse (*Mus musculus*) is, as its name implies, common.

The Water Vole (*Microtus amphibius*) is in Broadland incorrectly called the water-rat. It is abundant in the district, the banks of the rivers and dykes being honeycombed in all directions by its tunnels. It is less easily disturbed than the brown rat of the marshes, and can often be watched while feeding on some muddy ledge just above water. Osier growers accuse it of damaging their osiers by nibbling the bark

and occasionally it is said to destroy root crops ; but in the marshlands it does little harm, except where its tunnelling weakens a wall or causes a dyke-bank to subside. It swims well, and, according to Mr. Trevor-Battye, makes use of its hind legs alone when not hurried, carrying its fore paws close to its sides. The Common Field Vole (*Microtus agrestis*) is common on both uplands and marshlands ; and the Bank Vole (*M. glareolus*) occurs not infrequently in fields and hedgerows. Of the Shrews, the Common Shrew (*Sorex vulgaris*), locally known as the ' ranna ' or ' ranny ', is generally distributed over the dry soils, and also occurs on the marshes. On account of its nocturnal habits it is seldom seen ; but occasionally a nest of young shrews is discovered in a hedge-bank or among the marsh or meadow grass in summer. The Water Shrew (*Crossopus fodiens*) is found in similar places to the water vole, and, though seldom seen, is probably not so rare as some believe. The Oared Shrew, a dark variety of *Crossopus fodiens*, also occurs.

Of the Bats, the Noctule or Great Bat (*Vesperugo noctula*) is common, and the Pipistrelle or Common Bat (*Vesperugo pipistrellus*) is to be seen almost all through the year. The former is easily distinguished by its size ; the latter is generally distributed over the district. The Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*) is probably not uncommon, as it is said to be plentiful in Norfolk. It has been identified at Yarmouth. The barbastelle (*Synotis barbastellus*) is recorded for both Norfolk and Suffolk, so may possibly be included as a Broadland species. The reddish-grey bat (*Vespertilio nattereri*) has been identified.

Sir Thomas Browne records a seal killed at Surlingham Ferry. A grey seal (*Halichoerus gryphus*) was shot on Breydon in 1882. Porpoises have been seen stranded on the Breydon flats. An Atlantic right whale (*Balaena biscayensis*) is said to have been taken near Yarmouth in 1784 ; the common porpoise (*Balaenoptera musculus*) has occurred at Winterton (1857) and Happisburgh (1875) ; a lesser porpoise (*B. rostrata*) was caught in Yarmouth harbour in 1891, and a dead example was stranded at Gorleston in 1896. The grampus (*Orca gladiator*) is recorded for Yarmouth (1823), and the white-beaked dolphin (*Delphinus albirostris*) for Yarmouth, Gorleston, and Breydon.

## REPTILES

The common ringed snake (*Tropidonotus natrix*) is somewhat rare in Broadland, though it may occasionally visit the marsh dykes in search of frogs, its chief food. I have seen specimens between four and five feet long taken on the Batt Hills, a wooded hanger sloping down to the Waveney near Bungay. The viper or adder (*Vipera berus*) is found on the heathlands, marshlands, marsh walls, and sandhills. In the neighbourhood of Hickling, it is, Dr. Gerald Leighton tells me, abundant. Marshmen are sometimes bitten by vipers, but I never heard of a fatal case occurring in the district. The treatment of a viper's bite is simple. A handkerchief or piece of cord should be bound tightly round the bitten limb above the wound—that is, nearer the body—to check circulation. Then the wound should be sucked thoroughly, and the saliva and venom spat out of the mouth. Oil or ammonia should, as soon as possible, be rubbed into the wound; but soft fat is almost equally efficacious if used quickly.

The common lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*) is common on the heaths and sandhills, and is also found on the river walls and warm dry banks. The sand lizard (*L. agilis*) does not occur in North Norfolk, and it is doubtful if it occurs in Broadland. *L. vivipara* is often mistaken for it. The blind worm, slow-worm, or deaf adder (*Anguis fragilis*) seems to be rare, though it occurs occasionally near Lowestoft and in other parts of the district. Some of the country folk still believe it to be venomous.

## AMPHIBIANS

The common toad and the common frog are abundant. The running toad or natterjack (*Bufo calamita*), though local in distribution, is plentiful in some parts of the district. On the uplands of Reedham and the heathlands of Fritton and Herringfleet it is very common. It is easily distinguished from the common toad by its smaller size, the faint yellow line down its back, and its mode of progression. It never hops, but walks quickly, and sometimes runs like a mouse. The Rev. Theodore Wood found an edible frog in a lane at Brunstead. Two



varieties of this species occur in Norfolk ; but this is the only instance of its being met with in Broadland I am aware of.

The three British newts, the smooth newt (*Molge vulgaris*) the warty newt (*M. cristata*), and the palmate newt (*M. palmata*), occur in the district. Dr. Gerald Leighton found all three species in a pond near Brunstead Church, the palmate newt being as common there as the smooth and warty newts.

## FISHES

BY ARTHUR HENRY PATTERSON

The number of species of fish found in the rivers and lakes and along the coast of Norfolk is an exceptionally large one, and had the suggestion made by the Messrs. Paget in 1834, when dealing with the fishes of the Yarmouth district, been wisely acted upon, a wider cognizance of our East Coast species would have been the result. 'The most probable means of arriving at a more perfect knowledge of the subject,' they wrote, 'would seem to be to accompany the shrimpers to their ground in the roads just off the town, and carefully examine the contents of the nets ; by this plan, there is every reason to think that many smaller species, or the young of larger ones hitherto unknown here, if not perfectly new, would be discovered.'

As a result of my own efforts to follow this suggestion I have had a number of rare and hitherto unrecorded species—for the county—preserved for, or brought to, me, among them the boar-fish, ribbon-fish, and several others.

Owing to the near proximity of Breydon to the sea—a distance of some two miles—the larger tides running into it from the ocean sweep up, as it were, numerous marine species, that find themselves carried by the currents, and, just as certain rare birds appearing in the county list owe their presence there to the accidents of their appearance—e.g. being blown hither or brought by tidal influences and other natural circumstances—so sea fishes washed ashore on the Norfolk coast, alive or dead, find admission to the ichthyological records. And fishes taken well inside the harbour, and finding their way into Breydon—our salt-water Broad—have certainly some claim to recognition here.

The naturalists who have been interested in the local fishes



have been very few as compared with those who have 'followed' birds, and written upon them. Among them the following observers and their writings may be mentioned :

Sir Thomas Browne's List, written in 1666.

*The Natural History of Yarmouth* by J. and C. J. Paget 1834.

*The L'Estrange Household Book.*

*The Fauna of Norfolk* by Richard Lubbock, M.A. 1848.

Records of rare species from 1881 to date by A. H. P.

#### ALPHABETICAL LIST

Angler (*Lophius piscatorius*).—Has occurred in Breydon.

Atherine (*Atherina presbyter*).—Breydon in summer; taken with smelts. Common in Lowestoft Harbour basins.

Baillon's Wrass (*Cranilabrus melops*).—Two examples found in the Tank.<sup>1</sup> Length about two inches. New to the County, January 1930.

Bass (*Labrax lupus*).—Occasionally visits Breydon.

Bib (*Gadus luscus*).—Abundant in Breydon, September 1897. Runs small in size.

Blenny, Viviparous (*Zoarces viviparus*).—Not so abundant as formerly in Breydon and lower reaches of the Bure. Produces young alive—sometimes as many as 130.

Bream (*Abramis brama*).—Abundant in rivers and Broad. Heaviest recorded for Norfolk: Beeston Regis, 11½ lb. 1879; one of 8¾ lb., Thorpe (Yare), June 1879.

Bream, Pomeranian (*A. buggenhagii*).—Hybrid-roach and silver bream. Found in Yare and at Fritton. Other hybrids occur at Fritton.

Bream, White (*A. blicca*).—Swarms in Fritton Lake. Thin slimy, and often full of cestodes. Rarely reaches 4 lb.

Brill (*Rhombus laevis*).—Have on two or three occasions found brills the size of a florin swimming in the Tank. They undoubtedly reach Breydon.

Burbolt (*Lota vulgaris*).—Occurs rarely to-day in Yare, Bure and Waveney. Seldom taken. Lubbock says it 'seems to prefer the slow-running rivers to the Broad'.

Carp, Crucian (*Cyprinus carassius*).—Occurs in one or two Broad and in Fritton Lake. Not a bold biter. 'A

<sup>1</sup> For this and other references in the list to the Tank, see p. 210.

solitary specimen has twice been observed in the Yare' (Lubbock). One at Potter Heigham, June 1901.

Carp (*C. carpio*).—Dr. P. H. Emerson says that the carp has been seen in Hickling and Barton Broads and in Irstead Shoals. Rarely takes a hook. One hooked at Fritton fought like a tiger and insisted in getting under our boat. Have known three or four fine fish floating helpless on Breydon salt tides.

Carp, Prussian (*Carassius gibelio*).—Supposed to be a variety of the carp. I have caught many in a shallow pool at Lound, near Fritton Lake, exactly answering to the coloured plate in Couch's *British Fishes*.

Chub (*Luciscus cephalus*).—I picked up an example floating down the Waveney near Bungay in 1890. It occurs in West Norfolk, in the Ouse and Thet. Lubbock states that 'it is totally unknown in the Yare, Bure, and, I believe, the Waveney'. A 7 lb. 2 oz. example taken near Santon Downham.

Coal-fish (*Gadus virens*).—Has been taken on Breydon. Saw one caught on a hook near yacht station on the Bure; weight 4 lb.

Cod (*G. morrhua*).—In pre-sewerage days from Breydon down to the harbour mouth codlings swarmed in October almost annually, and during the herring fishery. In 1890 twenty or thirty boats lying at the Knowl, on Breydon, hauled in codlings as fast as they could cast angle. I have covered the floor of my punt with them.

Conger (*Conger vulgaris*).—Congers occasionally visited Breydon. An old Breydoner, Jack Gibbs, speared a conger of 13½ lb.; and a 28-pounder was taken in a smelt-net.

Dab (*Pleuronectes limanda*).—Now and again goes up river as far as Breydon. Some numbers pass through the Tank pipe in spring; often as large as a flat trowel.

Dace (*Leuciscus vulgaris*).—Occurs in Broads and rivers, chiefly frequenting the upper riverways.

Dog-fish, Piked (*Acanthias vulgaris*).—During the 1921 protracted drought a dog-fish was captured near Wroxham, and I have seen a small shoal netted with smelts on Breydon.

Doree (*Zeus faber*).—A small example left by the tide on a mud-flat.

Eel (*Anguilla vulgaris*).—Abundant in rivers and Broads; caught also on Breydon, although not so plentiful as formerly.

- Father-lasher (*Cottus scorpius*).—Frequent in Breydon. A hardy fish that makes small trouble of tainted waters.
- Flounder (*Pleuronectes flesus*).—Local: 'Butt'. Formerly very abundant in Breydon. Has been caught on the hook at Potter Heigham and Wroxham.
- Garfish (*Belone vulgaris*).—Frequently ensnared in mackerel and herring nets. One occurred within five miles of Norwich, in the Yare.
- Goby, Little (*Gobius minutus*).—Breydon, and in river tide-pools.
- Goby, Speckled (*G. auratus*).—Common in Breydon. Swarms in lower Yare.
- Gudgeon (*Gobio fluviatilis*).—Upper reaches of the rivers. Have seen them caught in shallows at Fleggburgh Broad.
- Gurnard, Grey (*Trigla gurnadus*).—Has been netted on Breydon.
- Herring (*Clupea harengus*).—Myriads of tiny herrings, known as 'syle' and 'whitebait', ascend to Breydon in summer. A favourite prey of the terns. Thousands are sometimes stranded at tide-fall on the flats.
- Lampern, Mud (*Petromyzon branchialis*).—Freshwater ditches (Dr. Lowe).
- Lampern (*P. fluviatilis*).—Ascends the rivers to spawn. Sometimes seen at 'work' in shallows.
- Lamprey, Sea (*P. marinus*).—Occasionally netted on Breydon. Two at Geldeston Lock, taken by keeper. Several recorded for Bure and Hickling. Formerly plentiful in Waveney.
- Loach (*Nemachilus barbatus*).—Stony shallows in upper reaches of rivers.
- Lumpsucker (*Cyclopterus lumpus*).—Green examples, size of almond-nuts, come to the Yare in early spring. Lively little fellows when in the Tank.
- Mackerel (*Scomber scomber*).—Formerly abundant off Yarmouth. Saw a nearly adult mackerel swimming languidly in the Bure in 1909. Several small mackerel were taken in a smelt-net.
- Miller's Thumb (*Cottus gobius*).—Upper parts of rivers and shallow 'becks' and Broad.
- Minnow (*Phoscinus phoscinus*).—Upper reaches of rivers.
- Mullet, Grey (*Mugil capito*).—Breydon, Lake Lothing, and Oulton Broad. Fairly abundant until latter half of nineteenth century.

- Mullet, Lesser Grey (*M. chelo*).—Saw one caught on a hook on Breydon. Mr. T. Southwell identified it as a variety of *chelo*, known as *Mugil septentrionalis*.
- Perch (*Perca fluviatilis*).—In all rivers and some Broads. Descends the Waveney to the 'edge of the salts' for so-called 'Jack Shrimp' or 'white prawn' (*Leander longirostris*).
- Pike (*Esox lucius*).—Broads, rivers, marsh dykes. 'Fell tyrant of the watery plains'.
- Pipe-fish, Broad-nosed (*Syphonostoma typhle*).—Have seen this deep-mouthed fish in the Tank.
- Pipe-fish, Greater (*Syngnathus acus*).—Occasionally ascends to Breydon. Have seen it in the Tank.
- Pipe-fish, Snake (*Nerophis aequoreas*).—Found its way into the Tank.
- Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*).—Large example reported in county paper as caught at Potter Heigham. Doubtful; but small examples have occasionally come up to Breydon and been caught in small trawl-net.
- Pogge (*Agonus cataphractus*).—Formerly abundant in the Bure. Still met with on Breydon.
- Pollack (*Gadus pollachius*).—In May 1888 I caught seventeen 11-in. at the mouth of the Bure. Locally termed 'pin-niker coles'.
- Power Cod (*Gadus minutus*).—A lively example drawn up into the Tank, May, 1930.
- Ray, Spotted (*Raia maculata*).—Small ones rarely in Breydon.
- Ray, Thornback (*R. clavata*).—Small ones occasionally visit Breydon. 'Short'un' Page, an old eel-catcher, found a large example stranded on the flats. He tied a rope to the tail and towed it to his punt.
- Ribbon-fish (*Cepola rubescens*).—Two of this warm-water species came up the Tank pipe and for a while swam freely, but soon succumbed. Two also reported from Lowestoft.
- Roach (*Leuciscus rutilus*).—Common in all waters. I have caught it on the edge of Breydon on neap tides.
- Rockling, Five-bearded (*Motella mustella*).—Not infrequently caught by pier anglers in the harbour. Has been hooked on Breydon.
- Rudd (*Leuciscus erythrophthalmus*).—Abundant in Broads; small ones in the Bure and at Fritton Lake.
- Ruffe (*Acerina vulgaris*).—Broads and river shallows. Once abundant in Yare.



- Salmon (*Salmo saler*).—Formerly occurred occasionally in the rivers. T. Southwell, F.Z.S., considered it 'at one time a recognized visitor'. A salmon of 33 lb. weight was taken at the New Mills, quite across the city of Norwich, in 1819.
- Salmon-trout (*Salmo trutta*).—Six salmon-trout were taken on hooks baited with shrimps in June 1913 at Oulton Broad. A river-inspector reported finding seven dead salmon-trout floating between Surlingham and Cantley. At one time a not infrequent traveller up the Yare; now rarely ascends.
- Sand-launce, Greater (*Ammodytes lanceolatus*).—Have taken this fish from the Electric Tank.
- Sand-launce, Lesser (*A. tobianus*).—This has been found in the same receptacle. A very pretty swimmer.
- Scad (*Trachurus trachurus*).—When smelting on Breydon, November 1905, a very large scad, or 'horse mackerel', was hauled in kicking vigorously.
- Scopelus, Muller's (*Maurolicus pennantii*).—A freshly dead example of this fish, known also as 'Pearlsides', was picked off the mud at the edge of the Bure a mile from Yarmouth and was brought to me by the gentleman who found it.
- Shad, Allis (*Clupea alosa*).—Said by Lubbock to have been taken at Norwich in 1840. Rarely seen in Breydon.
- Shad, Twait (*C. finta*).—I have seen this fish taken on Breydon.
- Skulpin, Yellow (*Callionymus lyra*).—Occasionally occurs in Breydon.
- Smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*).—Plentiful, as a rule, in Breydon in its season; formerly great quantities. There were at one period four or five smelt-boats at work. Met with up rivers at spawning time. Fetched as much as eight shillings per score during the war.
- Sole (*Solea vulgaris*).—Not infrequently taken on Breydon in shrimp-trawls in summer.
- Sprat (*Clupea sprattus*).—Now and again examples turn up in Breydon. A large one in the Tank, June 1930.
- Stickleback, Fifteen-spined (*Gasterosteus spinachia*).—Rare in Breydon. Have seen it in the Tank. Handsome in colour when alive.
- Stickleback, Nine-spined (*G. pungitius*).—Marsh ditch-water; never foresakes fresh water. Rarely mixes with the following species.



- Stickleback, Three-spined (*G. aculeatus*).—Abundant in marsh dykes ; lives as happily in sea-water as in fresh.
- Sturgeon (*Accipenser sturio*).—Has been taken in the Yare and on Breydon. Lubbock writes of one taken in the Waveney having this inscription : ' This Sturgeon was taken upon the sholes above Beccles Bridge on the 7th of April, 1753 '. It was said to weigh 11 st. 9 lb.
- Sucker, Montague's (*Liparis montagui*).—Discovered a large example in the Tank, 1930.
- Sucker, Unctuous (*L. vulgaris*).—Frequent in Breydon. Known as ' sea-snail '.
- Tench (*Tinca vulgaris*).—Broads, ponds, rivers, and ditches. Often seen in the weedy shallows of Barton Broad. Capricious in the estimation of anglers. Golden tench were introduced some years since, but otters and herons undoubtedly checked their numbers. One of 3½ lb., taken on Broad near Acle, June 1930.
- Tope (*Galeus vulgaris*).—I saw an example taken on Breydon, September 1903, nearly 6 ft. in length.
- Trout (*Salmo fario*).—Upper waters and Yare and Bure. Many years ago the late Rev. C. J. Lucas turned out a number in Filby Broad, whence they had access to Rollesby and Ormesby Broads. Some increased in size, but soon diminished in numbers.
- Turbot (*Rhombus maximus*).—In February 1930 I saw two small turbot, the size of a crown piece, swimming merrily in the Tank. No doubt quite a number of flat fish go up Breydon on the tides.
- Weever, Viper (*Trachinus vipera*).—Frequently taken on Breydon in smelt nets. Are killed by the heel of a smelter on sight.
- Whiting (*Gadus merlangus*).—Was at one time numerous in autumn in the Yare and in Breydon. Two or three have been taken in an eel-sett on the Waveney, twelve and a half miles from the sea.

### III

## THE ROTIFERA OF BROADLAND

BY H. E. HURRELL

THE following list of rotifers found in the Broads district is absolutely reliable, each species having been found by the writer and ratified by experts.

For several years the ponds, both wayside and mid-field, in all parts of the county were searched in the hope of finding that extraordinary rotiferon *Pedalion mirum*, but without success until 1905, when it turned up quite unexpectedly a few yards from the writer's laboratory, in an improvised pond at the foot of the garden, during the collection of *Daphnia pulex* (water fleas) for feeding hydras, when pedalion was found in large numbers, much to the delight of the finder, who had travelled many miles and spent many hours in search of it.

*Moral* : Never leave a pond or ditch unexplored, as the most unlooked-for specimens may turn up at any time anywhere.

Hudson and Gosse's order of tabulation has been rigidly adhered to, as being *facile princeps* the most up-to-date arrangement extant :

#### ORDER I.—Rotatoria, Rhizota.

##### *Flosculariadae*—

*Floscularia ornata*.

„ *campanulata*.

*Stephanoceros Eichornii*.

##### *Meliceradae*—

*Melicerta ringens*.

*Limnias ceratophylli*.

*Oecistes crystallinus*.

*Lacinularia socialis*.

*Megalotrocha albo-flavicans*.

*Conochilus volvox*.

„ *unicornis*.

## ORDER II.—Bdelloida.

*Philodinadae*—*Philodina citrina*.„ *roseola*.*Rotifer vulgaris*.„ *tardus*.*Actinurus neptunius*.

## ORDER III.—Ploima (Il-loricata).

*Asplanchnadae*—*Asplanchna Brightwellii*.*Synchaetadae*—*Synchaeta pectinata*.„ *tremula*.„ *tavina*.„ *gyrina*.„ *cecilia*.„ *tressilia*.*Triarthradae*—*Triarthra longiseta*.„ *breviseta*.„ *polyarthra platyptera*.*Notommataadae*—*Notommata lacinulata*.„ *parasita*.*Furcularia longiseta*.„ *gibba*.*Diglena grandis* (Loricata).*Rattulidae*—*Mastigocerca elongata*.*Hydatinadae*—*Hydatina senta*.*Rhinops vitrea*.*Dinocharidae*—*Dinocharis pocillum*.*Stephanops lamellaris*.*Salpinadae*—*Diaschiza semiaperta*.*Euchlanidae*—*Euchlanis dilatata*.

*Casinyonidae*—

*Monostyla solidaris*.

*Pterodinadae*—

*Pterodina patina*.

„ *mucronata*.

„ *elliptica*.

*Pompholyx sulcata*.

*Brachionidae*—

*Brachionus pala*.

„ *Mülleri*.

„ *rubens*.

„ *angularis*.

„ *urceolaris*.

„ *Bakeri*.

*Anuraeadae*—

*Anuraea aculeata*.

„ *acuminata*.

„ *cochlearis*.

*Notholca longispina*.

„ *acuminata*.

„ *scapha*.

„ *labis*.

## ORDER IV.—Scirtopoda.

*Pedalionidae*—

*Pedalion mirum*.

## IV

### GLOSSARY OF BROADLAND TERMS AND PROVINCIALISMS

- B**ABBING or Bobbing.—Eel-catching with a bunch of worsted-threaded worms.
- Blade.—The leaves of the reeds or sedges.
- Bolder.—The real bullrush (*Scirpus lacustris*).
- Bor.—A term of address ; probably an abbreviation of ‘ neighbour ’. ‘ Hallo, bor ; how are you ? ’
- Bottom-fye.—To clean out, applied to dykes.
- Buskin-net.—A net formerly used along the borders of reed-beds, from which the fish were driven into it by beating the reeds with long pools.
- Buttles.—Bitterns.
- Camping.—A game somewhat resembling football, formerly very popular in East Anglia.
- Carr.—A marshland copse or plantation, usually of alders or willows.
- Colts.—Young reeds.
- Crome.—A kind of rake used for cleaning out dykes.
- Crome-stick.—A stick with a curved or hooked handle, generally used for carrying a ‘ frail ’.
- Deek.—Dyke.
- Denes.—Dunes. Sandy tracts near or among the coast sand-hills.
- Ding.—A blow ; ‘ full ding ’—with full force.
- Dodman.—Snail.
- Drawing, dyke-drawing.—Cleaning out dykes.
- Drey.—Nest ; usually applied to a squirrel’s.
- Drift, driftway.—A marsh or drove road along which cattle are driven to the marshes.
- Drifter.—A boat used for herring or mackerel netting.
- Dydle, or dydall.—A tool used in dyke-cleaning.
- Eel-box.—A box in which eels are kept alive in the water.
- Eel-picking.—Eel-spearing ; eel-pick—an eel-spear.
- Eel-sett.—A large fixed net used for taking eels.



- Elvers.—Young eels.  
 Enow.—Enough.  
 Fare.—Appears, seems. 'He *fare* to know.'  
 Fared.—Seemed, appeared.  
 Fathom.—Five or six sheaves of reeds.  
 Flappers.—Young wild ducks.  
 Flats.—Mud-banks, oozy tracts left uncovered by the ebb tide.  
 Fleet.—Sometimes a marsh dyke, sometimes a shallow pool.  
 Frail.—A basket made of plaited rushes.  
 Ganzy.—A fisherman's guernsey.  
 Gin.—Give.  
 Gladen.—Yellow iris or water-flag. Really *Iris foetidissima*, but in Broadland usually applied to *Iris pseudacorus*.  
 Groundsels.—Foundations.  
 Gun-boat, or gun-punt.—A boat used by marshmen and Broadsmen for gunning, eel-spearing, etc.  
 Ham.—A small bay or inlet of a Broad.  
 Hard.—'On the *hard*'=on the shore, on the bank of a Broad or river.  
 Haysel.—Haymaking time.  
 Holls.—Upland ditches.  
 Hornpies.—Lapwings.  
 Hovers.—Boggy ground or floating vegetation by the riverside ; peat.  
 Hyst.—Hoist.  
 Keeler.—A kind of tub.  
 Kentishmen.—Hooded crows.  
 Laid (with ice).—Covered with a thin coating or layer of ice.  
 Lantern-men.—Will-o'-the-wisps (*Ignes fatui*).  
 Ligger.—(1) A kind of trimmer, buoyed by a bunch of rushes, used for catching pike ; (2) a plank footbridge over a dyke.  
 Mash.—Marsh.  
 Meak, or meag.—An implement used by reed-cutters.  
 Merrimills.—Maram hills, sandhills.  
 Mind.—Remember.  
 Nigh.—Nearly.  
 Oily.—A fisherman's waterproof coat.  
 Orters.—Otters.  
 Pattens.—Skates.  
 Picking.—Spearing.  
 Pokers.—Pochards.  
 Pot or pod.—A kind of bow-net forming part of an eel-sett.  
 Puit.—Black-headed gull.

- Pulk.—A small pool or marsh pond.  
 Quant.—A pole used for propelling yachts and wherries.  
 Quanter.—Punter.  
 Red-heads.—Pochards.  
 Reed pheasant.—The bearded titmouse.  
 Rodger's blast.—A sudden wind-gust or whirlwind.  
 Roke.—Fog.  
 Rokey.—Foggy.  
 Rond, or rand.—The swampy margin of a river or Broad.  
     Usually applied to the boggy ground between the water  
     and the river wall.  
 Roudding.—Spawning.  
 Saddlebacks.—Black-backed gulls.  
 Saltings.—Salt or meil marshes.  
 Salts.—Salt tides.  
 Scissor-grinder.—Grasshopper warbler.  
 Scoulton cobs.—Black-headed gulls.  
 Sea-smoke.—Sea-fog.  
 Sets.—Willow wands or boughs.  
 Sharming.—Making a noise, crying.  
 Shooves.—Sheaves.  
 Shutting-in time.—Sunset.  
 Sight.—Good deal. 'A *sight* more' = a good deal more.  
 Skep.—A kind of basket.  
 Slads.—Oozy grounds from which water has receded, or pools  
     of flood-water on the marshes.  
 Slugging.—Cleaning mud, etc., out of the dykes.  
 Smee.—Widgeon.  
 Smelters.—Smelt-fishers.  
 Staithe.—A wharf or landing-stage.  
 Stuff, marsh stuff.—Marsh vegetation.  
 Thowt.—Thought.  
 Tru.—Through.  
 Turf.—Peat.  
 Wakes.—Holes or unfrozen places amid ice on a Broad.  
 Walls, or river walls.—Artificial banks constructed for the  
     protection of the marshes from floods.  
 Wor.—Was.  
 Worams.—Worms.  
 Wuth.—Worth.



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